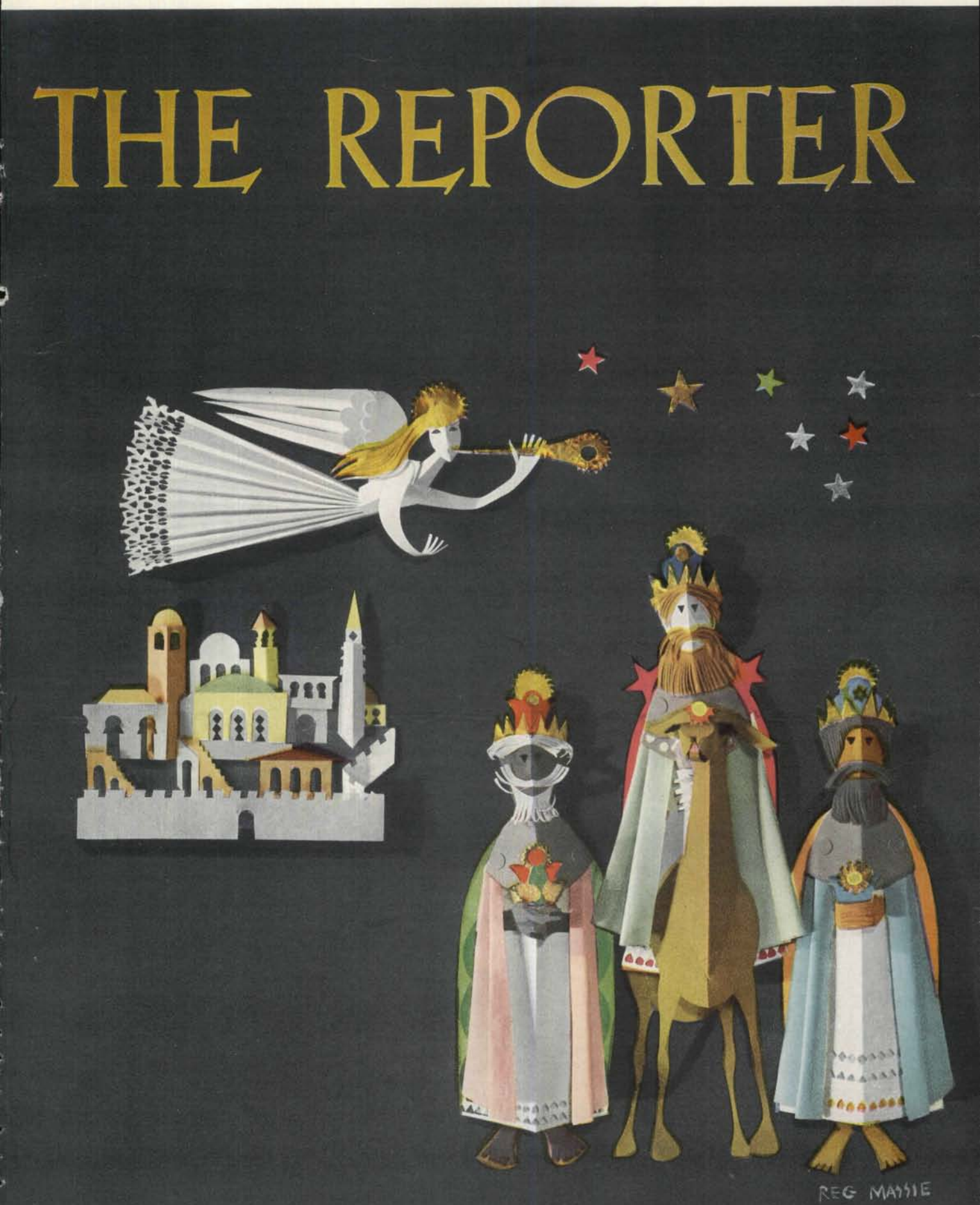
December 26, 1957 25¢

THE REPORTER



PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lord Calvert revives the dignity of the Christmas gift

GIVING is a lordly art. Notice the simple opulence of Lord Calvert's presentation chest. It announces one of the world's *three* great whiskies with fitting dignity. And it says so much besides.

Isn't that natural-grained wood a magnificent touch of lordly restraint? And have you noticed Lord Calvert's *new* bottle? It is the inspiration of a 17th Century craftsman. Aristocratic. Graceful. Slim as a book. An illustrious hallmark for the greatest of all the *American* whiskies.

You don't have to pay extra for Lord Calvert whiskey in this handsome presentation chest. Why settle for less?

How rare is your gift?

Lord Calvert whiskey is a rare luxury. If every man in America were rationed to *one* Lord Calvert highball *a year* there still wouldn't be enough to go round. A sound enough reason for placing your order *now*.

LORD CALVERT. AMERICAN BLENDED WHISKEY. 86 PROOF, 65% GRAIN NEUTRAL SPIRITS, CALVERT DISTILLERS COMPANY, N.Y.C.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Christmas! Bah! Humbug!"

The man in the wheel chair leaned into the microphone. "Christmas!" he snarled. "Bah! Humbug!" And, as they had in Christmases past, millions of young listeners chilled at the mental picture of the baleful Scrooge.

It was a Christmas institution, back in the Forties, this annual reading of Charles Dickens' classic. Its reader was something of an institution himself. In his turbulent lifetime he had been an unsuccessful painter but a good amateur second-baseman, a composer whose music was played by the New York Philharmonic, and a model for Frederick Remington.

To most people, though, he was Lionel Barrymore, the actor, and they loved him.

He was both crusty and kindly (he loved reading "A Christmas Carol"), adventurous, stubbornly independent in thought and outlook. And game as they come. Although an accident in 1936 imprisoned him in a wheel chair, he went resolutely on—working in motion pictures and making public appearances for nearly twenty years more.

No question but that Lionel Barrymore was one-of-a-kind. Yet the qualities so richly combined in him exist in a large measure among all the 170 million of us who call ourselves Americans.

They're why we are what we are, why our country is one of the strongest on earth. And why there is no wiser investment than an investment in America—through U. S. Savings Bonds, which guarantee the safety of your savings, up to any amount, and the rate of your return. Start buying Bonds today, through Payroll Savings or where you bank. And hold on to them!

Now Savings Bonds are better than ever! Every Series E Bond purchased since February 1, 1957, pays 3-¼% interest when held to maturity. It earns higher interest in the early years than ever before, and matures in only 8 years and 11 months. Hold your *old* E Bonds, too. They earn more as they get older.

PART OF EVERY AMERICAN'S SAVINGS BELONGS IN U.S. SAVINGS BONDS

PUBLIC SERVICE · ADVERTISING COUNCIL

The U.S. Government does not pay for this advertisement. It is donated by this publication in cooperation with the Advertising Council and the Magazine Publishers of America.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE REPORTER'S NOTES

As We Go to Press . . .

For some reason, we always feel uneasy whenever we have to acknowledge the fact that ours, like all other publications, is relentlessly hemmed in by such constrictions as the closing of pages—until the whole thing has been put to bed. An analyst sometime may say that we hate being time- and space-bound—an affliction that might find some relief on an interplanetary trip or in a padded cell.

Certainly we hate to close this issue now, while the heads of the NATO governments are on their way to Paris. Together with the leaders, a fantastic number of chickens are going to the NATO home to roost. We mention only a few: emplacements for built and unbuilt missiles, distribution and use of atomic warheads, Middle Eastern oil, Algeria.... Moreover, the expectations for this NATO "summit" meeting have been raised so high as to make any good NATOist —to say the least—apprehensive. If there is any luck-bringing or anti-evil-eye precaution we ourselves haven't taken, we aren't aware of it.

Yet we stick out our neck. We don't have to talk about what *will* happen. We talk about what *is*. The process of commonwealth formation in the west is irresistible, even if its institutions are still unknown. The West is a reality, for it is a civilization—a civilization that has not yet met its match. Not even the heads of government assembled in Paris and all their host of experts can defeat NATO. There may not be great men in Paris, but there is no scarcity of dedicated men there. Woe to those who are unequal to their task. For NATO is stronger than the sum total of its parts.

This *is* the fact. The details will be analyzed in the next issues.

In the House of Labor

This has been a hard year for organized labor, which has had its seamier aspects held up to thorough public inspection. While conscious of its shortcomings, labor is nervous about how far government may go in a program of crippling legislation.

Given these mixed feelings, the two dramatic highlights at the recent AFL-CIO convention in Atlantic City were understandable. The more obvious of the two came when a roll-call vote drummed the powerful Teamsters Union out of the House of Labor. The more subtle moment of drama was the wave of relief that swept over the convention when Secretary of Labor Mitchell laid down the administration's program for labor legislation.

The ousting of Hoffa & Co. was not done easily or with unanimous conviction. According to reports, David McDonald, president of the United Steel Workers, made no secret of his unhappiness and was occasionally seen in wistful conference with the "defendant" Teamsters. Among those who voted against expulsion was the president of the Upholsterers, who were the first to provide for an outside board of appeals against any allegedly dictatorial acts by its officers. Almost at the opposite end of the spectrum, the important but far from immaculate Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners likewise joined in the opposition.

The uneasiness—and it extended to many who went along with the Meany-Reuther leadership—was on several levels. Some simply didn't like the idea of throwing out the largest International—1,333,000 members —of the newly merged labor movement. Some feared the conflicts to come; the Teamsters are in a position to make or break their former brother unions in any later conflicts that may develop. Some saw the action as "appeasement" of Senator McClellan's committee. And others, knowing more than they cared to say on the floor, must have responded to the scathing remarks of John F. English, the Teamster secretary, who doubted that five unions in the whole federation could meet the "acid test" of probity that had been applied to his union.

In this jittery mood Secretary Mitchell's remarks came as a great

CHRISTMAS LIST

I'm in a dilemma, a pickle, a spot:
It's not what I want, but what I want *not*,
Or rather, I want it, but here is the out:
Whatever I do want, I want it *without*.

Now here's what I'm after: a car without fins,
A photo of Washington men without grins,
A speech without platitudes, deeds without words,
And songs without singers (but that's for the birds).

Oh give me a government, please, without guff,
And give me, without any smoothing, the rough,
And give me, oh give me, some news without trace
Of rockets or doctors' opinions or Space.

For these are the things that would pleasure my soul
To find in a stocking, without—please—a hole.

—SEC

THE REPORTER, December 26, 1957. Volume 17, No. 11. Entered as second class matter at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Published every other Thursday except for omission of two summer issues by The Reporter Magazine Company, 136 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y. © 1957 by The Reporter Magazine Company. All rights reserved under Pan-American Copyright Convention. Subscription price, United States, Canada and U.S. Possessions: One year $5, Two years $8, Three years $10. All other countries: One year $6, Two years $10, Three years $13. Please give four weeks' notice when changing your address, giving old and new addresses. Indexed in *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and *Public Affairs Information Service*.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

relief. The President, he said, would ask Congress for laws requiring regular reports on the expenditure of union funds, providing for a secret ballot in the election of union officers, and establishing penalties for the bribery of union officials by employers and vice versa. The administration, moreover, would not ask for—indeed it would oppose—a Federal "right to work" law or any move to bring labor under the anti-trust statutes. Nor would it permit "those who have never approved of organized labor to use labor's present difficulties as a curb to suppress unionism."

These and similar pronouncements by Mitchell had a mild and reassuring sound to men in fear of drastic sanctions. David Dubinsky, president of the International Ladies Garment Workers, was "pleasantly surprised" at the Secretary's "constructive suggestions." But a few days later, when the ideas suggested by Secretary Mitchell were spelled out in a government statement on future labor legislation, George Meany said that the White House proposals for dealing with labor abuses "bother me very much." Indeed, he was "very skeptical" about many of the same key provisions of the administration program that had been applauded when Secretary Mitchell announced them to the convention. Labor could not bring itself to cheer the regulatory intervention of government in its affairs, for so much depends on the particular government that does the regulating. Hence the continued uneasiness in the House of Labor.

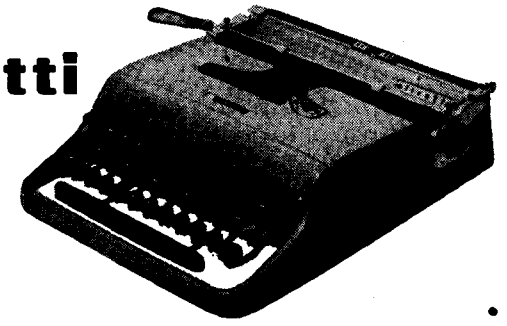
Hurray for What?

"I say we should get behind our missile people and help them . . .," exclaimed Vice-President Richard M. Nixon the other day. That was certainly the most memorable statement we had read during that particular half hour.

Get behind them how? Help them with what? That is to say, We the People? "Let's get away from our weeping walls and act like Americans," he went on, in the bracing style of a football coach on the eve of the big game. Act *how* like Americans? Doing what? He didn't explain. Or maybe the Vice-President wants us to act like a cheering section for

Two famous globetrotters. The smaller one—the Olivetti Lettera 22—travels the year and the world 'round. A singularly handsome and useful gift, prized for its airy lightness, its completeness and fine, smooth "feel." Blue, green or gray. $88 plus tax, with smart carrying case. For the name of nearby dealer, write Olivetti, 580 Fifth Avenue, N. Y. 36.

olivetti



PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our first-string team of technological wizards.

Meanwhile, other voices have been calling for the elevation of science to Cabinet rank. This is the burden of a recent staff report of the Senate Committee on Government Operations, which Senator Hubert H. Humphrey (D., Minnesota) intends to introduce at the next session of Congress. If the proposal is adopted, we shall find ourselves with a Secretary and Department of Science and Technology, which presumably will preside over all scientific and technological undertakings. Just where that will leave the other departments —Defense in particular—which are also engaged in some way with science and technology, will be a problem for a top co-ordinator to figure out. Here's one for Sherman Adams.

Before that, Senator Mike Mansfield (D., Montana) also called for the creation of a new department—to be headed by a Secretary of Research and Development. That department, too, could take over all the others, for there is no principle of our governmental structure that does not need to be the object of re-evaluation and research, and certainly all Federal institutions are more than inclined to expand and develop. We find this surfeit of zeal on the part of so many worthy people rather bewildering. "Do it with departments" seems to be the trend; and of course we must "get behind" all these departments. And here we make our suggestion: Why not have a Department of Common Sense?

Through a Glass Darkly

A group of very distinguished scientists recently met under eminent auspices. They were brought together to help celebrate the hundredth anniversary of Seagram's whiskey, a chemical compound long used in medicine and one of the earliest wonder drugs.

The theme of the celebration was the shape of things to come, with each speaker drawing a more repulsive picture of the world of 2057 than his predecessor, and doing it with a zest that at least raises a question as to whether the future might not better be left to the politicians after all.

Professor Hermann J. Muller, a Nobel Prize-winning biologist, described a eugenic paradise in which "foster pregnancy" will be the thing. Instead of humanly perpetuating their various penchants for folly, parents will order a combination of reproductive cells "derived from persons long deceased" whom they happen to have admired. A Beethoven type can be ordered by catalogue number, presumably, or a demi-da Vinci guaranteed by genes. An even trickier promise held out by Professor Muller is a kind of laboratory parthenogenesis that will turn out a human being with hereditary equipment from a single individual, whom he will resemble like an identical twin, instead of with "hereditary material picked in a random way from two different parents"—random but interesting.

ALL THESE prefabricated geniuses will live in a tidy, if sterile, world which was further delineated by the professor's colleagues at the Seagram seminar. What incentive they will have to compose symphonies or paint pictures we don't know, since the troubled mind of man is to be soothed and straightened out not by the Muses but, much more efficiently, by electricity and biochemistry. Dr. John Weir, who specializes in the psychology of creative thinking at the California Institute of Technology, foresaw the day when his successors would be able "to change emotions, men's desires and thoughts by biochemical means." Education will be simplified, too, with "perhaps even coded electrical information transmitted directly into the nervous system."

Rid of the old Adam at last, man can ditch ninety-nine per cent of the world's literature, with its archaic preoccupation with sin, desire, and human vanity. Dr. Weir holds out hope that "principles concerning the thinking process . . . will be so systematized that man should be able to generate creative ideas at will"—all homogenized, of course, and as innocent of emotion as a Fitzpatrick travelogue.

Work, too, will be pretty well outmoded. The horny-handed farmer will be replaced by a push-button operator, but even he won't have much to do once he's decided on his crop. "It will be possible, in fact," the Seagram Institute was told by Professor James Bonner, another Caltech man, "to program the entire farming operation and leave the farm to run itself from a master computer panel." (The neutron homeward plods its weary way . . .)

Actually there won't have to be much in the way of farming, because eating, like poetry, will be a pretty mechanical business. Professor Bonner thinks the vegetarian diet —there won't be enough animal flesh to accommodate the swollen population—will be "wholly satisfactory" and even "attractive," but, then, he's a man who thinks well of "steaks made from extracted vegetable protein, flavored with tasty synthetics and made chewy by addition of a suitable plastic matrix."

To us, a race of eugenic vegetarians having information injected directly into their nervous systems and giving out "creative ideas" in return, like a slot machine, is enough to set off a rampant nostalgia for the Middle Ages. It may be a reactionary thought, but it's something for a prophet to chew on, with or without a tasty plastic matrix.

SILLY VERSE

"Mohammed Visits the Zoo, Pets a Potto"—New York Times

Here's to the genial King of Morocco,
His sovereign visit was certainly socko,
He peered at the penguin and petted the potto
And acquired a chimp as a gift on the spot, oh.

Only once was the Monarch Mohammed not blithe on
His trip: when they asked him to fondle a python.
Confronted with reptiles, no ruler will vary:
Reaction is bound to be reactionary.

—SEC

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CORRESPONDENCE

THE LIMITED WAR

To the Editor: Robert Strausz-Hupé's perceptive and interesting article "The Limits of Limited War" (*The Reporter*, November 28) presents a well-formulated analysis of the totality of the Communist effort. This incisive treatment of limited war seemed particularly well done and very timely.

This recognition of the continuity of Communism's attack seems significant, for it emphasizes the West's requirement for versatile, total effort—military and nonmilitary—to effectively counter Communist aggression.

ARLEIGH BURKE
Chief of Naval Operations

To the Editor: Robert Strausz-Hupé's discussion of "the method by which Communism intends to reach its goal of world domination" is most revealing as an example of the kind of thinking that has led us into our present calamitous state.

The real conflict between East and West is not military but social. It is a complex struggle, and the old dichotomies of the greedy imperialist versus the noble proletarian or of the benign philanthropist versus the grubby agitator are quite out of date, though they still continue to play a part in the war of ideas.

We are already heavily overinvested in the means of obtaining death. While it may be true, as right-wingers like Eugene Castle have said, that you can't buy friends with food, still less can you befriend hungry people with guns unless they hope to use the guns to get food with.

We could, without sacrifice, minister to the needs of the hungry and thus turn them away from Communism and put them in a frame of mind to listen to what we could tell them about freedom. Instead, we are asked to sacrifice in order to ape the military side of the Communist challenge. Isn't it time we stopped kidding ourselves and put our American know-how to work on the side of life instead of death?

WILLIAM ROBERT MILLER
Nyack, New York

A PROBLEM OF CONTROL

To the Editor: Eric Sevareid's report ("Equations for Survival," *The Reporter*, November 14) that the world military balance has not shifted is reassuring in the face of current journalistic hysteria. His conclusions, and those of the Senate Armed Services Committee (although the latter were reached in the Golden Age of American superiority before Sputnik), reflect a critical thinking not often enough seen in the press.

Just one phrase disturbs me. It is not clear whether Mr. Sevareid's statement ". . . the world knows we would not start a war . . ." is part of his summary of the summary or is of his own making.

More people in the world are receiving distorted or untrue information, or no information, about the United States than are receiving undistorted, true information in abundance. Who can say of this majority that they know we would not start a war? Can a nation that used the atom bomb on Japan in 1945 be positively said to have complete military self-control in 1957?

R. MALCOLM, JR.
Santa Fe Springs
California

RECLAIMING THE SLUMS

To the Editor: I have read Oscar H. Steiner's article "Slums Are a Luxury We Cannot Afford" (*The Reporter*, November 14) with a great deal of interest and believe it sincerely presents what some of the cities are doing in the rehabilitation of some of the slum areas. We in Cleveland are attempting to revitalize the city, because we feel the future of the great city of Cleveland needs this type of program to keep it a thriving and good port city.

Articles such as this publicize the work that can be done through the co-operation of interested citizens and industrial leaders.

VAN H. LEICHLITER
President
American Steel & Wire
Cleveland

SEE THE MOVIE FIRST

To the Editor: I should like to make a comment on a review by John Kenneth Galbraith that appeared in your November 28 issue ("Two Novelists Lost in the Suburbs"). I saw the film and then read John McPartland's novel *No Down Payment*. The film itself deserved more review than Mr. Galbraith gave the entire novel. I felt that the novel had some significance and that it took a hard look at some facets of modern and suburban living. What of the novel's commentary on automation and the organization man, on secular and scientific facts, on religious faith and family life, the color line and property in suburbia, and the effects of multilevel backgrounds in close tract-housing proximity? Your magazine has shown interest in these contemporary problems, and I wonder at the brushoff given this novel by a Harvard economics professor even though he may be an "assiduous reader of contemporary novels."

ROBERT MANNERS
Los Angeles

UPS AND DOWNS

To the Editor: Paul Jacobs's article "Rainy Days in Sunny California" (*The Reporter*, November 28) serves a useful purpose in highlighting the results, the tragic human results, of our vacillating national policy in the field of military aircraft.

While it is true that the aircraft industry demands and develops skills that are not generally useful in other branches of industry, the situation concerning the re-employment of aircraft employees and the operation of seniority systems is considerably exaggerated. Another exaggeration appears where Mr. Jacobs discusses the current program of our organization. Actually the program to which he refers [for an emergency session of Congress, increased defense appropriations, and "depressed area" action] was one that was being pressed a month or two ago by our lodge at Republic Aircraft in Long Island, which was trying to enlist the support of other aircraft lodges. It never was an official I.A.M. program and lost steam after the launching of the first Russian satellite.

On the other hand the article failed to mention a very serious problem resulting from the current cutback of employment in the industry; that is, the closing down by some major air-frame producers of branch plants, located in relatively small communities, which fed components and major assemblies to the main plant. The closing of such branches, which employed between 200 and 1,000 workers, has a severe impact on smaller communities where they provided employment of an important percentage of the local work force and where opportunities for re-employment are practically nil.

A. J. HAYES
International Association
of Machinists

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

To the Editor: Of all the recent statements about the failures of American education, your remarks about Ph.D. "mumbo jumbo" and poor English (in a November 28 Note, "Compulsory Education") are as devastating as they are inexact. As usual, Americans are hell-bent for a scapegoat, and these remarks are hardly in keeping with the quality of *The Reporter*.

A doctorate is above all a degree for *research* and teaching. And the crux of our educational dilemma at the university level lies in the fact that teachers with the doctorate are often denied the time and opportunity to do the research vital to their profession. Without research, academic stagnation is inevitable, whether it involve the sciences or the humanities.

Nevertheless, some college and university administrators are still looking for Ph.D. "teachers, not research men," as if they were separate entities, while government officials and industry demand higher degrees. They all want Ph.D.s when most of the work involved is as remote from research as flying a kite. If the Ph.D. has been vulgarized in the U.S., so has the term "research." And so has the English language in most of our newspapers and magazines.

LLOYD W. BUHRMAN
Associate Professor of Languages
University of New Hampshire

IN PRAISE OF ART

To the Editor: I should like to congratulate you on the art standards of *The Reporter*. It is a pleasure to see a cover by Dong Kingman again. The pen-and-ink drawings in the magazine are also an enjoyable feature.

MRS. WILTON H. PUTNAM
La Mesa, California

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by LINGUAPHONE

The World's Standard Conversational Method

SPANISH (American or European) • FRENCH • GERMAN
ITALIAN • JAPANESE • MODERN GREEK

any of 34 languages available At Home

A Linguaphone Recorded Language Set is a lasting gift—an invaluable asset in business, travel, school, armed services and social life. With LINGUAPHONE's life-like recordings, you LEARN any language the same easy, natural way you learned your own. AT HOME you hear 8 to 12 of the world's best native language teachers, both men and women, speak. You listen—you Understand—YOU SPEAK! Over a million home-study students. World-wide Endorsement. WRITE for FREE Book: details of FREE Trial. Linguaphone Institute, T-157-127 Radio City, N. Y. 20, N. Y.

EUROPE

Summer 1958—70 days

We'll see the usual, plus North Africa, Yugoslavia, East Germany, Czechoslovakia, Berlin, Denmark, and Ireland. A low-priced, different kind of trip for the young in spirit who don't want to be herded around. Write to:

EUROPE SUMMER TOURS
255 Sequoia — Pasadena, California

Christmas lives in the joy and satisfaction of the giver . . .

and in the delight and thankfulness of those who receive.

Buy and use Christmas Seals

FREE! THREE HIGH FIDELITY 12" COLUMBIA lp RECORDS

Write today for illustrated brochure describing a wide choice of outstanding 12" Columbia lp records, from which you may choose 3 FREE as a new member of the Columbia lp Record Club. Here's an exciting opportunity to get the best in music. Choose from a large selection of outstanding albums such as Levant Plays Gershwin; Sinatra's The Voice; Erroll Garner's Concert By The Sea; Rimsky-Korsakov's Scheherazade; Percy Faith playing music from Li'l Abner; Ellington Uptown; and many more. You will also receive full information of the Club's Bonus Plan, through which you obtain additional Columbia lp records at no cost. For full details, fill out and mail the handy coupon right now.

MAIL THIS COUPON TODAY

Columbia lp Record Club
Terre Haute, Indiana

Please rush me illustrated brochure with full information about the Columbia lp Record Club and your free record offer.

Name.....

Address.....

City.....Zone....State.....

Canada: 11-13 Soho St., Toronto 2B 81 Ing.

WHO— WHAT— WHY—

IT IS NOT in search of escape from the adversities our nation is facing these days that we study in this issue the cases of two scientists who, because of their thinking, were subjected to trial—Galileo Galilei, in the seventeenth century; J. Robert Oppenheimer only a few years ago. As **Max Ascoli's** editorial points out, the importance of the two decisions against Oppenheimer can scarcely be overestimated. The scientists who had developed the atom bomb received a clear intimation that they had better avoid expressing any opinion or judgment as to the way the weapons they had created could be used or under what international conditions their use could be avoided and even their manufacture prevented. The very citizenship of the people who had done the most to increase our country's power was thereby curtailed together with, as one might put it, their right to be wrong, to have ideas that might later prove mistaken. Actually, many of the ideas of the atomic scientists around Oppenheimer have proved in our own days to have been quite right. Even Edward Teller, Oppenheimer's archenemy in the scientific community, has come out for a vast system of air-raid shelters, for continental defense, for the dispersal of our air bases—all ideas which Oppenheimer advocated and which brought him into trouble.

Quite a number of people are now urging the government to make use once again of Oppenheimer's talents. Among others is former AEC Commissioner Thomas E. Murray, the only AEC Commissioner who thought Oppenheimer to be disloyal. Now, through some strange mystery of the human mind, Mr. Murray would not object to having this same man work again in fields which the very quality of his mind would make sensitive. No matter whether Oppenheimer is re-employed or not, the harm done to the nation by the decisions in his case cannot easily be undone.

To illustrate the nature of this harm and its extent, **Giorgio de Santillana** has compared Oppenheimer's trial with that of Galileo Galilei—the man who was condemned for the crime of believing the Copernican theory. Mr. de Santillana, Italian born, is now professor of the History and Philosophy of Science at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. He is the author of several books in Italian and English, including *The Crime of Galileo* (University of Chicago Press).

OUR Mediterranean correspondent **Claire Sterling** recently traveled to Turkey, a country which has been very much on the map since Khrushchev accused it of plotting war on its neighbor Syria. Mrs. Sterling reports that the Turks have enough troubles of their own and can do without those the Soviet leaders have been bringing them. On one point our correspondent is quite sure: The Turks are tough. . . . Whenever the administration goes off on an economy binge there is renewed talk of curtailing expenditure for agriculture. Nothing much ever comes of this because, as is well known, farmers have a way of making themselves heard. **Carroll Kilpatrick,** who is on the staff of the Washington *Post and Times Herald,* writes about the soil bank, what it has done, and what it might be able to accomplish if it were better financed and administered. . . . There are many reasons for France's deep involvement in Algeria, including the fact that oil has recently been found on territory over which the nationalists claim control. **John H. Lichtblau** is an economist who has specialized in international oil problems.

Ray Bradbury's latest book is a novel, *Dandelion Wine* (Doubleday). . . . **George R. Clay** is a young free-lance critic living in Princeton. He has had short stories of his own in two of the Martha Foley collections. . . . **Saul K. Padover** is the assembler and editor of *Confessions and Self-Portraits: 4600 Years of Autobiography* (John Day).

The Christmas cover is by our Art Director, **Reg Massie.**

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE REPORTER

THE MAGAZINE OF FACTS AND IDEAS

MAX ASCOLI, *Editor and Publisher*

Executive Editor, Philip Horton • *Managing Editor*, Robert Bingham
Associate Editor, Gouverneur Paulding
Contributing Editors: William Harlan Hale, Robert Bendiner
Art Director, Reg Massie • *Copy Editor*, Derek Morgan
Staff Writers: Claire Sterling, Marya Mannes, Charles Clift, Paul Jacobs
Assistant to the Managing Editor, Louisa Messolonghites • *Librarian*, Ruth Ames
General Manager, John J. Borghi
Circulation Manager, George Hinckley • *Director of Advertising*, Patricia Calvert
Director of Promotion, Shirley Katzander • *Production Manager*, Ann Hollyday Sharp

VOLUME 17, NO. 11 **DECEMBER 26, 1957**

THE REPORTER'S NOTES 2

An Analogy

MINDS ON TRIAL—AN EDITORIAL . . . . . *Max Ascoli* 8

GALILEO AND J. ROBERT OPPENHEIMER . . . . . *Giorgio de Santillana* 10

At Home & Abroad

TURKEY: MENDERES GAMBLES ON TIME . . . . . *Claire Sterling* 19

PORTRAITS OF THE AGE . . . . . *Feliks Topolski* 20

THE SOIL BANK DESERVES A BETTER TRIAL . . . . . *Carroll Kilpatrick* 24

FRANCE FINDS TREASURE IN THE DESERT . . . . . *John H. Lichtblau* 26

Views & Reviews

THIS YEAR OF SUCH GREAT CHANGE . . . . . *William Harlan Hale* 30

Theater: LOOK BACKWARD, PLAYWRIGHTS . . . . . *Marya Mannes* 33

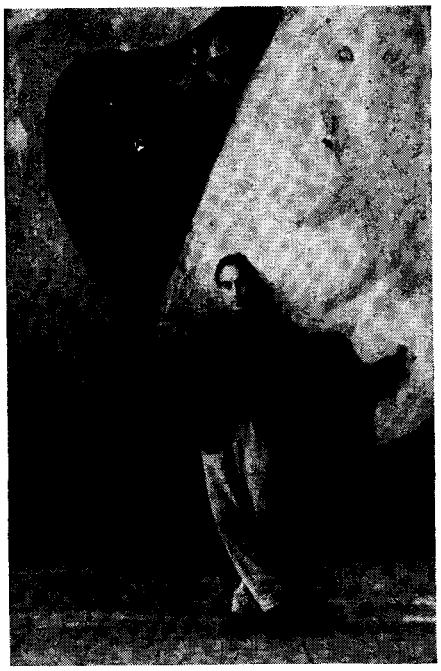
ALMOST THE END OF THE WORLD—A SHORT STORY . . . . . *Ray Bradbury* 35

THE CASE AGAINST BOREDOM . . . . . *George R. Clay* 38

BUT ONE OF THEM IS A BEAR . . . . . *Saul K. Padover* 40

Editorial and Business Offices:
136 East 57th Street, New York 22, N. Y.

Manuscripts or artwork submitted to The Reporter should be accompanied by addressed envelope and return postage. The publisher assumes no responsibility for the return of unsolicited manuscripts or artwork.



Feliks Topolski, a Polish-born British artist, does not make his drawings from models in a studio, with the light fixed just right and a pause for rest. "I draw constantly wherever I find myself, and I deliberately get myself into the midst of 'events' all over the world," he has explained.

He drew the Battle of Britain in the London streets, American politicians at the nominating conventions, Gandhi and Nehru in India. The British government commissioned him to portray the Coronation in 1953. When Queen Elizabeth traveled to this country, Topolski naturally found himself here too. He is a roving reporter whose dispatches are pictures.

Topolski's work hangs in the British Museum and the Tate Gallery in London. It can be seen in a dozen other cities—including Tel Aviv, Singapore, New Delhi, Melbourne, and Brooklyn. He publishes his drawings twice a month on brown "butcher paper" in the tradition of the eighteenth-century broadsheet.

A portfolio of Topolski's work appears on pages 20 and 21 of this issue. His reports will appear frequently in *The Reporter* from now on.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Minds on Trial

In this, our Christmas issue, we offer our readers a historical allegory: the tale of two trials of the mind in which two men were condemned as security risks by the authorities who had jurisdiction over them. The allegory deals with two historic cases, with two of the literally countless men who have been punished for holding and espousing ideas that no clearance could make safe. Every established order that history knows about has had such trials, where men have been punished because their mode of thinking and believing was considered un-Jewish or un-Athenian or un-Catholic or un-American. The most fateful security trial mankind has ever known was that of a Jew born 1957 years ago.

Trials of the mind, of men accused of undermining the existing order because of the potentialities of future action which is inherent in their beliefs, are standard operating procedure in certain societies and can be the basis of their strength. The Communist rule over one-third of mankind would not even be conceivable without unrelenting thought control. Only a fanatic civil libertarian could maintain that the systematic policing of the mind leads inevitably to the destruction of the order it is meant to defend. It all depends on the nature, on the purposes, of each order. Soviet Russia disciplines with the same meticulous thoroughness the productivity of its citizens, no matter whether the products are theory, steel, or meat. Soviet Russia claims to be a revolutionary society on the march. But can a society like ours afford such trials of the mind as that of J. Robert Oppenheimer?

The Catholic Church did not gain anything from the trial of Galileo, yet could well survive it. Its function is to minister to the believers' souls, and to prepare them for the other life, since according to the Church, the time men serve on earth conditions their timeless destiny. Because of Galileo, the notion of outer space and of our earth in relation to it has changed, but this has not affected the believers' toiling on this earth to earn their reward in an outer world. Actually, while every religion at some time or other has been antagonistic to science, science has not deprived man of a sense of infinity or of the need to pray.

In Soviet Russia, thinking about social problems or man's destiny is out of bounds, and as a substitute for it there are all the stereotypes of Marxist-Leninist orthodoxy. The recent Moscow declaration, laboriously produced by the world's Communist leaders, is such an astonishing collection of trite commonplaces that it is hard to understand how anybody bothered to write it. Yet, this state-imposed atrophy of political or moral ideas may well be one of the causes of the spectacular progress of Russian science. The most vigorous brains find shelter—perhaps a measure of privacy—in the intricacies of mathematics and of technology. Indeed, the greater the intricacies, the safer the shelter for the men barricaded behind abstractions and able to prove their worth to the régime with their scientific and technological achievements.

Shrewd operators like Khrushchev must be aware of what they stand to gain by granting to scientists and technicians freedom of inventiveness and huge rewards. This freedom is not likely to be contagious as long as the régime succeeds in keeping scientists and technicians a race apart. True, the régime may become too dependent on them. But as long as there is a large supply of them and a close watch is kept on their extracurricular activities, Khrushchev probably has no great cause for worry. Ultimately, the wall between moral thinking, which is stifled, and technological thinking, which is fostered, may crumble. For the time being, Sputniks, intercontinental missiles, and other wonders of Soviet technology may well be the result of the secluded freedom granted by the Soviet government to its physical scientists.

On Whom Could They Lean?

In our country, too, it happened that a group of physical scientists—the best we had—became, in a very short time, burdened with a crushing load of knowledge. Unlike their Russian colleagues, our scientists-turned-weaponeers could not help searching beyond the weapons they had produced, worrying about the alternatives these weapons had created, their impact on our strategy and on our diplomacy. It was difficult for our scientists not to ask these and many more questions, considering that the government, on many an occasion, had de-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

manded that they, the scientists, suggest some answers.

These men needed assistance—all the assistance that the spiritual values on which our society is supposed to be founded could give them. But where were such spiritual values to be found, and in whose hands? From every loudspeaker in the country they could hear all about the sacredness of the human person and its inalienable rights. But these men needed something more than singsong. They needed to be reassured that the system of weapons they themselves had devised could become one of the instruments—but by no means the only one—of a wise diplomacy. In an age when technology is irresistibly leading to automation in so many fields of production, there is certainly a risk that the ever-increasing production of nuclear weapons may lead to an automation of death.

One could not say that the churches were particularly active in coming to the rescue of those few men aching under the Godlike power of sheer destruction that they themselves had brought into being. Spiritual leadership of the type sometimes represented by philosophers and poets was not available, since this commodity for a long time had been in scarce demand. Political leaders could only tell our atomic scientists to sit tight on their secrets and keep quiet.

Left largely to their own devices, our scientists did as well as they could, and managed to develop their own ideas on the nation's interests, strategy, and diplomacy. They were greatly concerned with tactical atomic weapons, limited warfare, need for a strong continental defense, and the network of our alliances. There was nothing particularly novel—not to say seditious—in their thinking, and it is indeed amazing how haltingly and modestly they made their ideas known to the public. Among all men having to do with weapons, those responsible for the atomic bomb were the most inept in public relations. Separately and together they tried to give themselves a sort of homemade philosophy; but the dream of ever becoming philosopher-kings did not even remotely enter their minds.

The Muzzle and the Leash

And then Oppenheimer was brought to trial. His urging that ways be found to bring war back to the battlefield was considered preposterous if not treasonable. The scientists were warned, and in the most categorical terms, that they could serve only one master, the government, and that they must not only do as they were told but do it enthusiastically. At the same time they must be emotionally uninvolved with the crisis of the nation, abide by the security system, and like it. They must also manage to protect the strongest offensive military interest of the country. There was something quite sinister in a scientist who concerned himself with defense as Oppenheimer did. A scientist who works for the government and does not want to be considered a security risk is well advised if he drops the habit of taking counsel with his conscience.

Yet our society is based precisely on the principle that every man is the servant of two masters: the one for whom he works and his conscience, the outward and the inward. The objects of both allegiances can have many different names and, in fact, be different, but the duality is essential. This duality is not a compulsory schizophrenia, but rather a system of reciprocal checks without which there is no freedom. Yet the very men who needed freedom the most, for their responsibility was the most crushing, were told that they must serve only one master—enthusiastically.

The tragedy of the two Oppenheimer decisions is exactly here: they are utterly inconsistent with the system of values which is supposed to be ours. They cannot be called infamous for there is always an element of deliberate evil in infamy and, sometimes, of greatness. Rather, they are pitiful. The men responsible for these decisions could not possibly have known their import.

One of the major causes for alarm about the condition of our country today is that too many irreparable decisions are reached thoughtlessly. The security apparatus was built and is kept running for its own sake. No one ever thought of establishing a segregated servitude for our scientists as a counterpart of the segregated freedom that the Russian scientists enjoy. Yet things have drifted very much that way.

In our defense establishment men have been working hard, and money has been spent profusely, in a series of disjointed, unrelated efforts, each tied to some group of interests, or to a special conception of warfare. There are no devilish villains on our national scene. Rather, there are too many smug men, each one of whom might have done well in more limited fields. Intellectual sluggishness, perhaps, has been our greatest curse.

EVERYBODY is a slave in Soviet Russia but the scientists. Here, everybody is free and only the scientists are kept on the leash. The Oppenheimer decisions have muzzled them. No wonder that in mathematics or in technology the Russians are getting ahead of us.

A free society has its test not in the way it succeeds in moving toward a chimerical conception of history, but in the here and now. It has been proved that we have fallen short of our standards in many a field—and not only in the production of gadgets. But there is something else to be done here and now aside from catching up with Soviet technology or giving a better foundation in mathematics to our children. We need a greater respect for ideas among the largest possible number of our citizens. The realm of the intellectuals is as essential to the survival of the nation as the realms of business or of labor. It must become strong, responsible, self-governing. There is no greater or more urgent need in America today.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Galileo And J. Robert Oppenheimer

GIORGIO DE SANTILLANA

When Galileo Galilei was brought before the Tribunal of the Inquisition in Rome in 1633, Pope Urban VIII was determined to break once and for all what to him was the incomprehensible arrogance of the scientific mind. Even after the culprit was found guilty, he was not treated harshly. He was never refused access to the sacraments, and he was allowed to pursue his scientific studies provided he kept away from astronomy. Yet special pains were taken that he should die under imposed penitence, and thus be refused burial in hallowed ground as still and forever *vehementer suspectus.*

The Inquisitional trial *de vehementi*—that is, a trial for vehement suspicion of disloyalty, or of heresy as they called it in those days—began with a firm assumption of guilt, or at least of bad judgment, that could not be dispelled by any facts brought in evidence. Under our law, legal proceedings are supposed to begin with an assumption of the defendant's innocence unless or until guilt is proved. Yet many marks of a trial *de vehementi* are to be found in the hearings of J. Robert Oppenheimer before the Atomic Energy Commission's Personnel Security Board in Washington in 1954.

In both trials the accused could not defend himself against the fundamental accusation that was never brought up at the trial. Galileo had no advocates in court, nor was there any discussion of the Copernican theories as such. Galileo was not allowed to defend his scientific work: the only question was, Had he disobeyed the Church or not? Oppenheimer was allowed to have lawyers, but they had no clearance, and security considerations ruled out any adequate discussion of the facts relating to Oppenheimer's controversial views—which were, after all, the basis of the whole trial.

In each case the scientist was shown a good deal of official consideration, although in the public consciousness he was clearly branded as one who was either too clever or too scared to commit himself to the major infamy but whose intentions were sinister from the start. In each case the purpose of the proceedings was to inflict social dishonor on the accused in order to deter others from certain kinds of action that the authorities feared.

'New Science Casts All in Doubt'

There are, of course, many differences between the two cases. In the history of science Galileo is by far the greater figure. Despite all the innuendoes that have been made about him since 1633, his reputation as a "second Archimedes" could not be taken away from him. His ideas were accepted with excitement by the educated public of his times. But in our day the discovery of dreadful powers, for which mankind may not yet be ready, has enveloped science in a climate of fear and even guilt—a fact that no doubt contributed to paralyze Oppenheimer in his defense.

It is permissible to speculate about what would have happened if Oppenheimer, together with Fermi, Bethe, and two or three other authorities in theoretical physics, had stated in 1942, as Heisenberg did in Germany, that the atom bomb was not feasible. No one could have really known except them. On the other hand, supposing the bomb could be made, there was also the troublesome possibility that it might trigger the explosion of our whole planet. Theoretically, it looked all right, but what man of sound practical judgment will trust himself wholly to theory in a matter utterly without precedent, a jump in the dark?

Heisenberg was certainly a patriotic German and a very great physicist, yet, after extensive exploratory work with his colleagues, he gave up—and not even Hitler could say anything.

There is another important difference between the cases to be considered: the Galileo trial concludes with a solemn abjuration; the American trial does not. Rome proceeded on established orthodoxies, hence the final abjuration was in order. But our society is based on the dignity of the individual, and the defendant was permitted to give his recantations right at the beginning as a sort of spontaneous admission. This is what Oppenheimer's pitiful apology in his letter of March 4, 1954, actually amounted to.

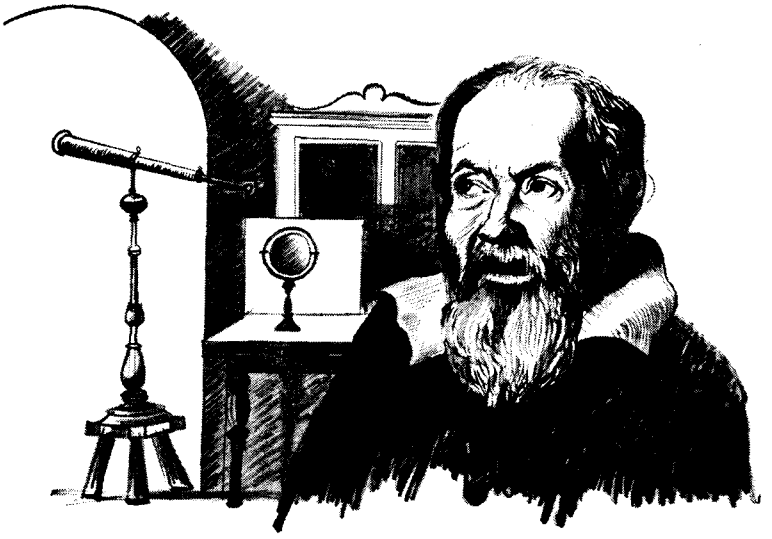
Galileo ends up on his knees, but people forget that he started out by challenging his judges, in the name of the law, to tell him what was wrong with his book. Oppenheimer is on his knees at the start—as his legal advisers told him he must be—pouring out in public a tale of his past personal attachments and private beliefs, recounting his insignificant indiscretions, protesting that he has learned his lesson, that he can still be useful. There is, of course, the same ludicrous contrast in both cases—two men with enormous capacities to learn pretending that they had learned their lessons from judges who were by nature "im-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

movable and unpersuadable," as Galileo describes them. Still, Galileo did not have to accuse himself right at the outset of being adolescent-minded, fuzzy-headed, immature, and a liar. He was able to bargain shrewdly with a few such admissions in the course of the trial. He was willing to declare himself rash, vain, ambitious, and somewhat irresponsible, but always in order to exact a concession.

In both cases the object of confession was absolution. Absolution for what crime? Lack of proper "enthusiasm" for directives—Church directives, security directives, H-bomb directives. The equivocation carefully built up is that the "lack of enthusiasm" is taken to refer to the interests of one's country or one's faith, whereas it actually refers to various opinions among ecclesiastics, various types of Pentagonic thought, past, present, and future. "Thou askest us now to believe that thou didst believe that we had maturely considered and finally decided all that is to be seen, considered, and decided in the matter of the survival of the human race. . . ." I apologize for this pastiche out of the 1633 sentence, but it does come awfully close.

IN A CENTURY as intellectually refined and respectful of forms as the seventeenth, a man knew what was expected of him: it was principally externals. He must maintain certain opinions "affirmatively"; beyond that he could think as he pleased. He must pretend to be speaking only "academically," or he could resort to the approved dodge of discussing philosophical "probabilities," but he must be sure to point out that they could not be true according to the Faith. A man knew he was writing at his own risk. If the authorities caught up with him, they would compel him to say he had never meant it. This was strictly a formal humiliation, for it was well understood by everyone who counted that he went on thinking every word he had written. A man's condemnation meant only that he had been restored to the community of the faithful, and that was the end of the affair. It was a settlement, at least, in that it came at the end. After the formalities, the man could even be used again if need be.



We, on the other hand, have only this inane notion of "maturity" and that other one of enthusiasm to go by, crudely and furtively transferred from pep-talk usage into actual legal standards.

The Modern Heresy

The conclusions of the Gray-Morgan Board (it was really the Gray-Morgan-Evans Board, but Dr. Evans wrote a sharply dissenting opinion) are as follows: ". . . We have come to a clear conclusion, which should be reassuring to the people of this country, that he [Oppenheimer] is a loyal citizen. . . . We have, however, been unable to arrive at the conclusion that it would be clearly consistent with the security interests of the United States to reinstate Dr. Oppenheimer's clearance and, therefore, do not so recommend.

"The following considerations have been controlling in leading us to our conclusion:

"1. We find that Dr. Oppenheimer's continuing conduct and associations have reflected a serious disregard for the requirements of the security system.

"2. We have found a susceptibility to influence which could have serious implications for the security interests of the country.

"3. We find his conduct in the hydrogen-bomb program sufficiently disturbing as to raise a doubt as to whether his future participation, if characterized by the same attitudes in a government program relating to the national defense, would be clearly consistent with the best interests of security.

"4. We have regretfully concluded that Dr. Oppenheimer has been less than candid in several instances in his testimony before the board."

In other words, they admit that Oppenheimer has not disclosed security information. In fact, they themselves stated in an earlier section: "It must be said that Dr. Oppenheimer seems to have had a high degree of discretion reflecting an unusual ability to keep to himself vital secrets." It is about entirely different secrets that they are worried. Oppenheimer had not handed over a person by the name of Chevalier to the police.

Haakon Chevalier, a professor of French literature and a close friend of Oppenheimer, had relayed to him the suggestions of a Communist, George Charles Eltenton, that Americans disclose their discoveries to Russia. Oppenheimer refused sharply, and later warned Security of Eltenton's attempt, but made up a false account of the affair to spare Chevalier. This was to become the famous "lie." Oppenheimer later gave Chevalier's name to the authorities.

OPPENHEIMER was found by the AEC to have exhibited a "persistent and willful disregard for the obligations of security" to a degree that would endanger the common defense and national security. Now both J. Edgar Hoover and General Leslie R. Groves had not taken the charges so seriously when they had first considered them. Hoover's

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

strongest statement was that he "could not feel completely satisfied in view of J. Robert's failure to report promptly and accurately what must have seemed to him an attempt at espionage." General Groves had called Oppenheimer's protection of Chevalier a kind of "schoolboy attitude that there is something wicked about telling on a friend" and had also dismissed as unessential the entire account of Oppenheimer's early leftist associations. When Groves was asked, "Based on your total acquaintance with him and your experience with him and your knowledge of him, would you say that in your opinion he would ever consciously commit a disloyal act?," the general replied, "I would be amazed if he did." These men wanted a job done, and had confidence in Oppenheimer's ability to do it.

WHEN THE CASE went up to the AEC, Commissioner Eugene M. Zuckert raised, and then quickly dismissed, a very pertinent question:

"There have been suggestions that there may be a possible alternative short of finding Dr. Oppenheimer a security risk. One possibility suggested was that the Commission might merely allow Dr. Oppenheimer's consultant's contract to lapse when it expires on June 30, 1954, and thereafter not use his services. I have given the most serious consideration to this possibility and have concluded that it is not practical."

Why wasn't it practical? Because someone else might hire him. In fact, the Science Advisory Committee of the Office of Defense Mobilization was asking for him. The AEC decided to try to make Oppenheimer unemployable in his own field.

What this action would do to the scientific world was clearly foreseen by Dr. Evans, the dissenting board member, and by Dr. Henry D. Smyth, the dissenting AEC commissioner, who also happened to be the only men on the two boards who were professional scientists. Dr. Evans wrote: "I personally think that our failure to clear Dr. Oppenheimer will be a black mark on the escutcheon of our country. His witnesses are a considerable segment of the scientific backbone of our nation and they endorse him. I am worried about the effect an improper decision may have on the scientific development in our country.

"Nuclear physics is new in our country. . . . I would very much regret any action to retard or hinder this new scientific development."

One example of the scientific community's reaction was contained in the testimony of Dr. Vannevar Bush: "I feel that this board has made a mistake and that it is a serious one. I feel that the letter of General [K.D.] Nichols which I read, this bill of particulars, is quite capable of being interpreted as placing a man on trial because he held opinions, which is quite contrary to the American system, which is a terrible thing. And as I move about I find that discussed today very energetically, that here is a man who is being pilloried because he had strong opinions, and had the temerity to express them. If this country ever gets to the point where we come that near to the Russian system, we are certainly not in any condition to attempt to lead the free world toward the benefits of democracy."

Suddenly They're Dangerous

Time and again the professional Inquisitors had dismissed as not serious, or downright fraudulent, the accusatory material that piled up in their files against Galileo. Accordingly, the scientist had rightly concluded that the traditional directives still stood, and that it was permissible to discuss, at least hypothetically, the dangerous subject of Copernican astronomy. In fact, the Pope himself had told him that he was a most valuable man, and that he should use this opportunity to go on "adorning Christendom with his eloquence." The usefulness of both scientists to society was clearly recognized. Both of them had delivered the goods: Galileo the prestige of his telescopic discoveries, Oppenheimer the atom bomb. The trouble came when the scientists went on to exert their influence, however tentatively and respectfully, on matters of high policy. Galileo's book was a discreet but transparent attempt at getting the Church to change its mind on a fundamental scientific issue. Oppenheimer, too, expressed definite views about the over-all strategy for which his individual contributions formed an important part. Both men acted openly, with full "clearances." But when the authorities woke up to the implications of what the scientists were saying, they decided that these men were dangerous. The stable doors were closed, not quietly but with a crash, to convey the impression that there was still a horse to steal. Both, it was suddenly discovered, had made their great mistakes a decade or more before; both had ignored security injunctions.

BOTH MEN were surprised to see how the world changed around them as they faced a procedure *de vehementi*. The late AEC Commissioner John von Neumann described that surprise:

"I would say that all of us in the war years . . . got suddenly in contact with a universe we had not known before. I mean the peculiar problem of security, the fact that people who looked all right might be conspirators and might be spies. . . . This had on anyone a shock effect, and any one of us may have behaved foolishly and inefficiently and untruthfully so this condition is something ten years later, I would not consider too serious. . . . We were all little children with respect to the situation which had developed, namely, that we suddenly were dealing with something with which one could blow up the world. Furthermore, we were involved in a triangular war. . . . None of us had been educated or conditioned to exist in this situation, and we had to make our rationalization and our code of conduct as we went along. For some people it took two months, for some two years. . . . I am quite sure that all of us by now have developed the necessary code of ethics and the necessary resistance. So if this story is true, that would just give me a piece of information on how long it took Dr. Oppenheimer to get adjusted to this Buck Rogers universe, but no more. I have no slightest doubt that he was not adjusted to it in 1944 or 1945."

In his efforts to be polite, Dr. von Neumann seems to be conceding far too much. He almost takes it for granted that the scientist is bound to be foolish and childish until he is properly trained and housebroken. Maturity is defined in terms of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

survival in the political jungle. This is pure irony, but it is lost on the board. It is tragic to watch the parade of men who had been associated with atomic power from the beginning coming to testify that Oppenheimer, after all, had done some service to the state and that he was not a subversive:

¶ James Bryant Conant reiterated his opinion that ". . . a more loyal and sound American cannot be found in the whole United States."

¶ Charles Christian Lauritsen of the California Institute of Technology said that he had less doubt of Oppenheimer's loyalty than he did of "any other person that I know as well."

¶ Oliver E. Buckley, formerly board chairman of Bell Telephone: "I believed and believe that he was loyal to the United States. I just don't recall any event that even raised that issue in my mind."

¶ Even Dr. Edward Teller: "But I have always assumed, and I now assume, that he is loyal to the United States. I believe this, and I shall believe it until I see very conclusive proof to the opposite."

BUT JUST as in the Galileo affair, the insistent pleas of scientists and prelates from all over Europe were ignored by the cardinals of the board.

Dr. von Neumann's statement seems to come fairly close to the "overall commonsense judgment" that had been set by the AEC itself as a criterion for security procedures. Oppenheimer had never broken security when the Russians had no bomb; now that the Russians have the bomb, what possible justification can there be for getting rid of the man? So we have to dig up a Chevalier case which never existed in any serious sense even in 1943, we refurbish it in 1954, and make of it such a lapse in security as to endanger national safety. It's nothing short of wonderful to see what the final report of the AEC builds up out of this Chevalier business.

Galileo, too, had acted according to standing directives: he had been encouraged, and every sentence of his writing had been cleared and recleared. Then the news came down that he must be gotten rid of. So the Inquisitors dug up an alleged injunction that seventeen years before had forbidden him even to discuss the subject. The judge needed this injunction but obviously did not like it, and his embarrassment is obvious in the way he tried to move on quickly to something else. The chairman of AEC both needed and liked what had been found for him. In fact, he improved on it.

The Peters Case

A "susceptibility to influence" is cited by the board. (The parallel is the charge against Galileo of having "corresponded with certain German mathematicians," e.g., Kepler, a Protestant, whom he had also sponsored for his old chair in Padua.) The charge is based upon the Bohm, Peters, and Lomanitz episodes. In brief, Oppenheimer had not refused his help to men who wanted to keep their jobs or were trying to get a job abroad, although they were political suspects at home. But in one case, conscious of his delicate position, Oppenheimer spoke about Dr. Bernard Peters before the House Un-American Activities Committee in such a way as to damage gravely Peters's position at the University of Rochester. He was sternly called to task by a number of other scientists for having hurt Peters unnecessarily. Dr. Edward U. Condon wrote an outspoken rebuke that made Oppenheimer "angry." Oppenheimer then wrote a letter to the Rochester papers, trying to make up for the damage he had done to Peters. The board considers this an example of how Oppenheimer bowed to influence. But there is still worse: "Dr. Condon's letter . . . contained a severe attack on Dr. Oppenheimer. Nevertheless, he now testifies that he is prepared to support Dr. Condon in

ROME, 1633

Galileo Galilei (1564-1642) was the first to establish the link between mathematics and physics that became the foundation of modern science. The Church authorities held him in high regard as "a second Archimedes." What got him into trouble was not only his belief in the Copernican principle that the sun, not the earth, was at the center of our planetary system but his confidence that he could give the principle irrefutable proofs. Galileo himself suggested that certain passages of the Scripture, such as Joshua stopping the sun, be given allegorical interpretation. People with vested interests in the old ideas were aroused, and Galileo was secretly denounced to the Inquisition. The Church authorities felt that the issue was provoking "scandal," and in 1616 the Copernican principle was outlawed in spite of Galileo's pleas. Care was taken, however, that he should be notified in advance of the decree by Cardinal Bellarmine, chief theologian of the Church. Galileo could do nothing but submit.

Several years later, a new Pope, Urban VIII, was elected. Galileo had reason to consider him friendly. He managed to obtain from the Pope permission to write a book about the two systems, the old Ptolemaic and the new Copernican, provided that he did not commit himself definitely to either. The book he wrote, *Dialogue on the Great World Systems,* was given the imprimatur, but when it came out the authorities suddenly realized that it was a plea for the Copernican doctrine that the Church still proclaimed false, absurd, and contrary to Scripture. Galileo was ordered to Rome in 1633 and brought before the Inquisition. He could not believe himself in danger, since his book had been cleared, but an official document was "discovered" in the Inquisition files to the effect that seventeen years earlier, Cardinal Bellarmine and the Inquisitors had not only warned him not to hold the opinion but had enjoined him personally and explicitly never to discuss the subject "in any way whatsoever."

On the strength of that he was found guilty of meddling with theology, of having secretly held the condemned doctrine, of disobeying the injunction, and of having obtained his clearance under false pretenses. Except for the last point, Galileo was compelled to admit solemnly that he was guilty as charged and that he henceforth would "abjure, curse, and detest" Copernicanism. He was then sentenced to imprisonment for an indefinite period, which was commuted by the Pope to house arrest.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the loyalty investigation of the latter."

That "Nevertheless" seems a curious word to choose.

Here is another significant aspect of the Buck Rogers universe. If any susceptibility to influence was shown, it was when Oppenheimer stood before the Un-American Activities Committee and testified against Peters. "Will you step into my parlor, said the spider to the fly. And before I ask you a few simple questions, let me say I trust you are not susceptible to any undue influence." Mindful of his responsibility. Oppenheimer tried to conform to the laws of the political jungle. He thereby lost standing with the scientists, who felt that he was capable of selling out, and his usefulness was thus impaired. He did what he could to regain his standing among his colleagues, and at that point it was Gray and Morgan who ruled that his usefulness had been impaired.

H-Bombs and 'Enthusiasm'

Oppenheimer had been very doubtful in 1949 about committing a great deal of effort and rare materials to a crash program that seemed a wild gamble. He was not alone. Conant said, "I opposed it strongly, as strongly as anybody else . . ." I. I. Rabi and Enrico Fermi suggested an international agreement to outlaw the bomb before it existed. Hans Bethe testified: "I was hoping that it might be possible to prove that thermonuclear reactions were not feasible at all." Oppenheimer called a meeting of the General Advisory Committee of the AEC about the problem. He remarked: "There was a surprising unanimity—to me very surprising—that the U.S. ought not to take the initiative at that time in an all-out program."

What then was Oppenheimer's crime? Not sticking to his last. There is his famous letter to Conant:

"What concerns me is really not the technical problem. I am not sure the miserable thing will work, nor that it can be gotten to a target except by ox cart. It seems likely to me even further to worsen the unbalance of our present war plans. What does worry me is that this thing appears to have caught the imagination, both of the congressional and of military people, as the answer to the problem posed by the Russian advance. It would be folly to oppose the exploration of this weapon. We have always known it had to be done; and it does have to be done, though it appears to be singularly proof against any form of experimental approach. But that we become committed to it as the way to save the country and the peace appears to me full of dangers."

Is this what the board meant by exercising "highly persuasive influence in matters in which his convictions were not necessarily a reflection of technical judgment, and also not necessarily related to the protection of the strongest offensive military interests of the country"? He goeth about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may persuade.

Of course, others were discussing these same dangers. George Kennan admits having discussed them with both Oppenheimer and Secretary of State Acheson:

"It seemed to me there was unclarity in the councils of our Government. . . . The unclarity revolved around this question. Were we holding them [our weapons] only as a means of deterring other people . . . or were we building them into our military establishment in such a way that we would indicate that we were going to be dependent upon them in any future war, and would have to use them, regardless of whether they were used against us first? . . . If . . . you were going to regard them as an integral part of forward American military planning and something on which we would be dependent in a future war, then you came up with a different answer. . . ."

These were the views of an expert on foreign policy who found himself inevitably invading the province of the military. In the same way, scientists found themselves thinking about both foreign policy and military strategy. They all did. Of this, we have Rabi's confirmation: "The question was, should it be a crash program, and a technical question: What possibilities lay in that? What would be the cost . . . in terms of the strength of the United States because of the weakening of the effort on which something which we had in hand, namely, the fission weapons, and the uncompleted designs of different varieties, to have a really flexible weapon, the question of the interchangeability of parts, all sorts of things which could be used in different military circumstances. Then there was the question of the military value of this weapon . . . this weapon as promised which didn't exist and which we didn't know how to make, what sort of military weapon was it anyway? What sort of target was it good for? And what would be the general political effect? . . . we felt—and I am talking chiefly about myself—that this was not just a weapon. . . . We felt it was really essential and we discussed a great deal what you were buying if you got this thing."

'I Have Here in My Hand'

On April 12, 1633, when Galileo was being interrogated for the first time, he described an audience with Cardinal Bellarmine seventeen years before. The Inquisitor suddenly asked: "Was any other injunction made to you on this subject, in the presence of those Fathers, by them or anyone else, and what?"

Galileo is stunned. He has just presented a document given to him by the late Cardinal Bellarmine stating specifically that there had been no such injunction. Yet the Inquisitor is looking at another document in front of him, and this, after all, is the Inquistion. Galileo tries to retell the story carefully. "It may be that a command was issued to me that I should not hold or defend the opinion in question, but I do not remember it, for it is several years ago."

According to the Inquisitor, the injunction was "that you must neither hold, defend, nor teach that opinion in any way whatsoever."

It has been proved that the "injunction" had been forged into the record by the authorities at a later date. But Galileo is helpless. He stutters: "I do not remember it . . . but it may be that it was."

At this point, he has all but made the concession the Inquisitor wanted to drag out of him. A few days later, Galileo re-established the facts carefully in his written defense, but when the Inquisition summarized it for the judges, it did so in one sentence: "He admits the injunction, but . . . says he has no memory of

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

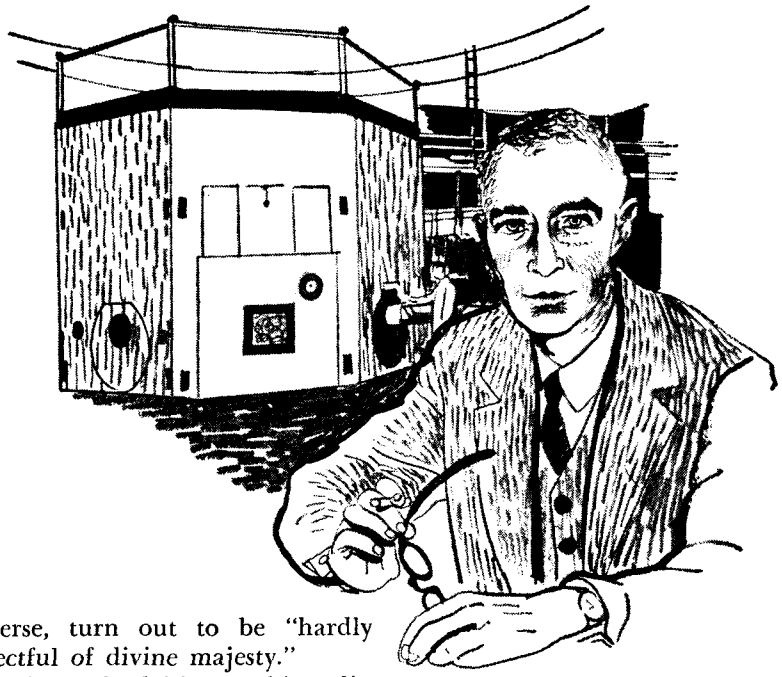
the clauses 'discussing' and 'in any way whatsoever.'" With effortless efficiency the strongest parts of Galileo's defense have been swept aside.

'Less Than Candid'

There would seem to be some foundation for the charge that Oppenheimer was "less than candid," and here, it seems to me, we are coming to the core of the analogy between the two cases. The technical capacity of both Galileo and Oppenheimer was profoundly misunderstood by the authorities. In the 1940's just as in the 1620's, the scientist was thought of as a sort of glorified mechanic. The grumblings at Los Alamos were no louder than those heard at Bellosguardo near Florence three centuries ago.

Galileo was encouraged by the Pope himself to write a book about the two opposing planetary systems, the Ptolemaic and the Copernican, in order to show that all arguments had been maturely considered and that the two doctrines stood in need of a higher decision, which was the Pope's. That decision had already been written and given to Galileo to be printed at the end of his discussion as the solution and "medicine of the end."

A remark of George Kennan's about the Oppenheimer case seems to strike to the heart of the Galileo case too: "You might just as well have asked Leonardo da Vinci to distort an anatomical drawing as that you should ask Robert Oppenheimer to . . . speak dishonestly." Galileo, an experienced courtier and man of the world, knew perfectly well that he could write rings around the authorities and cheat them with the greatest of ease, leaving the last laugh to his fellow scientists. But he didn't choose that course; because he rashly thought that his ecclesiastical superiors were also rational beings, he wanted them to think along with him, trusting to their good sense. His main concern, as he revealed covertly in the Preface, was to extricate them from the impasse their incompetence had gotten them into. To do that he had to break the rules. He had to show that his cosmological discoveries demanded a philosophical revision, even a theological one, and that conventional theories, seen in the light of a larger universe, turn out to be "hardly respectful of divine majesty."



At the end of his searching discussion, he dutifully tacked on the Pope's preordained conclusion; it wasn't his fault if it looked silly there. But making the Pope look foolish was a dangerous thing to do.

The indictment of the Preliminary Commission was quite clear about Galileo's failings. He had exposed the official school texts to ridicule (Point 5); he had not treated his own opinion with proper disbelief, but instead had indicated some belief in it (Points 3 and 4); he had not followed the papal directive with proper enthusiasm (Point 2).

In all this, Galileo was certainly being "less than candid." He had been intellectually honest, at his own risk. He had also been scrupulously legal, having his text twice revised and approved before publication. But he knew all along, ever since he had submitted the project, that he wasn't really doing what the Pope intended. Of course he hadn't lied about Cardinal Bellarmine's injunction. But in obediently endorsing an untruth by professing his orthodox belief in the immobility of the earth, he had surely been less than candid with the authorities. And some of his answers to the court were certainly evasive. Toward the end of the first session he said that he had really tried to show the weaknesses of the Copernican system. But by that time he was thoroughly scared, and his signature under the protocol was made with a trembling hand. In contrast, evasiveness was not typical of Oppenheimer's testimony; he even exaggerated his own failings.

THE AUTHORITIES sentenced Galileo both for disregard of basic security policy ("thou has dared discuss . . .") and for lack of candor ("nor does the license artfully and cunningly extorted avail thee"). The actual charges had to be trumped up, but the conflict underlying them was valid. It had come to a showdown about "who is going to do the thinking around here," and some lack of candor was inevitable on both sides. Loyalty was re-established at the price of humiliation. We end up exactly where the Gray-Morgan Board leaves Oppenheimer. In each case, the scientist had certainly acted imprudently according to accepted standards, but could be brought to trial only on charges of retroactive guilt.

There are some points at which the Roman authorities would seem to have been more considerate of the defendant than the Americans were. In his abjuration, Galileo was made to promise miserably, under oath and *sub poenis,* that "should I know any heretic or person suspected of heresy, I will denounce him to this Holy Office." Although there were obviously many suspects among Galileo's acquaintances, it was not held against him subsequently that he

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

did not turn them in. It became known that he was actually corresponding with heretics and even sending them his book to translate—it was as if Oppenheimer had entered into a secret correspondence with the Moscow Academy. But the Inquisitors decided that such conduct was only human and let it go at that.

The Sacred Order of SAC

Undeniably there was a lack of candor in Oppenheimer's answers at the hearing—not about his life but about matters of high policy. And this is because there were certain aspects of his predicament that simply could not be discussed frankly. Neither side wanted to go too far.

Light is shed on this aspect of the case by the interesting deposition of General Roscoe Charles Wilson of the Air Force, who engagingly admits that he is himself a "big bomb" man, and had consequently been very worried. He gives three reasons for his concern. One is "the fact that Dr. Oppenheimer was interested in what I call the internationalizing of atomic energy, this at a time when the United States had a monopoly . . ." The fact is that Oppenheimer was interested in that "internationalizing of atomic energy" quite officially as a scientific adviser to Bernard Baruch, who had been appointed to the U.N. Atomic Energy Commission by the President to try and find a way of establishing international control. The general is told this, but it does not seem to register in his mind. He is asked by the defense attorney whether "perhaps it might be better to internationalize it while there was a chance to do so"—that is, before the Russians got it. The general's answer is remarkable: "I had never heard that argument."

The general was worried that Oppenheimer had never backed certain ideas of the Air Force like nuclear-powered planes. "I don't challenge his technical judgment, but at the same time he felt less strongly opposed to the nuclear-powered ships."

Finally, General Wilson was worried because Oppenheimer approached thermonuclear weapons with "more conservatism than the Air Force would have liked. . . . Once again it was a matter of judgment. I would like to say that the fact that . . . he is such a brilliant man, the fact that he has such a command of the English language, has such national prestige, and such powers of persuasion, only made me nervous, because I felt if this was so it would not be to the interest of the United States, in my judgment. It was for that reason that I went to the Director of Intelligence to say that I felt unhappy."

Here is how the Florentine Ambassador set down Cardinal Barberini's explanation of why Galileo made him nervous: "He reminded me that Galileo wrote exquisitely, and had a marvelous capacity for persuading people of whatever he wanted to, and there was a danger that through his influence some fantastic opinion might take hold among these Florentine wits which are too subtle and curious."

LIKE THE CARDINAL, General Wilson is suspicious of the defendant's "marvelous capacity for persuading people." But what really troubled both of them were the ideas behind the eloquence. Oppenheimer had definite views on military strategy. The scientist surmised that our grand system of international alliances would not be worth the paper it was drafted on if we left our allies to face the Russians with popguns. Thus, he threw all his influence behind the development of tactical weapons that could be delivered by artillery. Generals Bradley and Collins supported him, and Gordon Dean, then chairman of AEC, also supported the policy, but naturally the Strategic Air Command was not entirely pleased by his efforts to ruin its monopoly over the A- and H-bombs, just at a time when it was having a running fight with the Navy over it. Nor was the Air Force delighted by Oppenheimer's insistence on the priority of essential defensive measures. His simile about the "champion with the glass jaw" served to turn the conflict into an open feud.

The informer Lorini had said, in a denunciation accompanying a forged document, that the Galileists were good Christians, but "a little overwise and conceited in their opinions."

This background of the Oppenheimer case is widely known in Washington, but all one finds in the trial record are the unguarded remarks of David T. Griggs, an Air Force consultant, who complained passionately about the evil influence of the "Z.O.R.C. outfit" (Zacharias, Oppenheimer, Rabi, Charles Lauritsen) in frustrating Air Force desires. Dr. Gray, the chairman, evinced no curiosity, but let us—even at this late date—sketch in the details for him. The "glacial movement," as it is called, got much of its impetus from the Air Force, and then suddenly, out of the blue, William Liscum Borden emerged from his civilian meditations at Westinghouse to denounce Oppenheimer as probably the key figure of Soviet espionage. Commissioner Smyth refers in his dissenting opinion to "enthusiastic amateur help from powerful personal enemies." As a matter of fact, the job seems to have been done with a great deal of professional skill.

It is difficult to know just what was going on. But it is all very reminiscent of the way the Jesuits of the Counter Reformation identified their order with the body of the Church and set about destroying Galileo, who had threatened their monopoly on education and intellectual strategy. Galileo had been warned by a friend quite early in the game: "It would be a business of which you would never see the end if you picked a quarrel with those Fathers, for they are so strong that they could take on the whole world, and if they are wrong, they would never concede it . . . the more so as they are no friends of the new opinions." Many years later Father Grienberger, the leading Jesuit astronomer, was to remark sadly: "If Galileo had only known how to retain the favor of the Jesuits, he would have stood in renown before the world, he would have been spared all his misfortunes and he could have written what he pleased about everything, even about the motion of the Earth."

Jesuits were fully determined to encourage progress in the arts and sciences, but only in strictly isolated compartments which the Order would establish under its own philosophical supervision. Let the mathematician develop mathematics, but

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

let him not try to mix mathematics with physics, which is a division of philosophy—and so on. All efforts were bent toward keeping social forces under the firm control of a consistent philosophical motivation. The trouble is, it didn't work. The whole structure was put under severe strain by the Galileo case.

Two Kinds of Security

The issue of security was hardly more than a political smoke screen in the Oppenheimer case. There are no scientific secrets about the atom bomb, only industrial secrets. In any event, leaking of information was not even among the charges against Oppenheimer. The more important issue of security in the Oppenheimer case was described by John J. McCloy, chairman of the board of the Chase Manhattan Bank, former Assistant Secretary of War and High Commissioner to Germany: ". . . You can't be too conventional about it or you run into a security problem the other way. We are only secure if we have the best brains and the best reach of mind in this field. If the impression is prevalent that scientists have to work under such great restrictions, and perhaps under such great suspicion, we may lose the next step in this field. . . . I would accept a great deal of political immaturity, let me put it that way, in return for this rather esoteric, this rather indefinite, theoretical thinking that I believe we are going to be dependent on for the next generation."

Oppenheimer, like Galileo, had performed his assigned task faithfully. In order to reach its unfavorable verdict the board was obliged to depend upon the curiously incoherent imputation of influencing and being influenced, plus "lack of enthusiasm" and the Chevalier episode. This was considered enough for the purpose.

WE COME now to the final stages of the case: verdicts. For Galileo there was only one formal sentence, but as in the Oppenheimer case, the decision was reached in two stages. The preliminary stage in Galileo's case was the sensible attempt of the Commissary General of the Inquisition to settle the affair with an administrative reprimand: this official seems to have been unhappy in his awareness that the case hung on a forgery, but he was overruled at the last minute by the Pope. In each case, then, we have a distinct final decision by the top authority.

But Urban VIII seems to have played a very different role from that of Admiral Strauss. There was a faction of "hanging judges" on the board of cardinals, and the influence of the Pope may have been, for all we know, in the direction of a compromise. In the modern case, the AEC chairman himself appears as the hanging judge.

Mr. Borden had written in his original denunciation of Oppenheimer: "More probably than not, he has since [1942] been functioning as an espionage agent, and . . . has since acted under a Soviet directive in influencing United States military, atomic energy, intelligence, and diplomatic policy." After a long subterranean voyage, the idea that Oppenheimer was somehow the servant of Communism reappears as fresh as a drop of dew in the final sentence of the AEC's majority decision:

"They [Dr. Oppenheimer's early Communist associations] . . . take on importance in the context of his persistent and continuing association with Communists, including his admitted meetings with Haakon Chevalier in Paris as recently as last December—the same individual who had been intermediary for the Soviet Consulate in 1943."

Reading this solemn judicial prose, one would think the admiral

WASHINGTON, 1954

Early in 1943 J. Robert Oppenheimer was appointed director of the atomic laboratory that produced the atom bomb. General Leslie R. Groves said in 1954 that at the time he appointed Oppenheimer to the project he was "aware that there were suspicions about him . . ." but that he considered him "absolutely essential" to the project and asked for his immediate clearance. In 1947, Oppenheimer became chairman of the General Advisory Committee to the Atomic Energy Commission; he was adviser to Bernard Baruch on the United Nations Atomic Energy Commission; and he was frequently consulted by the administration.

On December 23, 1953, in a letter from Kenneth D. Nichols, the general manager of the AEC, Oppenheimer was notified that his clearance had been suspended. At the same time, U.S. military establishments all around the world were so notified. Oppenheimer, on January 29, 1954, requested a hearing from the Personnel Security Board, which opened on April 12, and on March 4, 1954, replied by letter to Nichols's charges.

On April 13, the Nichols and Oppenheimer letters were printed in full in the New York *Times*. The special board appointed to hear his case was composed of Dr. Gordon Gray, Dr. Ward V. Evans, and Thomas A. Morgan. Oppenheimer chose as chief counsel Lloyd Garrison; Roger Robb was designated counsel for the AEC. The charges, which had been drawn up in the December 23 letter from Nichols, numbered twenty-four, twenty-two of which were old ones based on Oppenheimer's past leftist and Communist associations. The twenty-third charge stated that Oppenheimer had not reported on an attempt in 1943 by Haakon Chevalier, a friend of his, to gain atomic information; the twenty-fourth charge was that by opposing the H-bomb, he had slowed down its development. After extensive interrogations, the board, on May 27, 1954, found that "he [Oppenheimer] is a loyal citizen," but went on to say, Dr. Evans dissenting, "We have, however, been unable to arrive at the conclusion that it would be clearly consistent with the security interests of the United States to reinstate Dr. Oppenheimer's clearance and, therefore, do not so recommend."

On June 15, 1954, the AEC gave the transcript of the hearings to the press for release the next day, and on June 29 the majority decision of the AEC was delivered by Admiral Lewis L. Strauss, with Dr. Henry D. Smyth dissenting. Thomas E. Murray concurred with the majority decision and declared further that he considered Oppenheimer disloyal. Admiral Strauss announced that "concern for the defense and security of the United States" required the AEC to deny Oppenheimer further access to restricted data and so bring his service to his government to an end.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and his colleagues are referring to something mentioned somewhere in the record. But there is nothing there about "persistent and continuing associations with Communists" except the "early" associations. Once again, with effortless efficiency, the case for the defense has been swept away.

There never was a Chevalier case in any relevant sense, even in 1948. Refurbished and built up into a marvelous monster in 1954, it still remains nothing. Chevalier was and has remained a political nitwit.

The AEC's judgment is obviously meant to convey in carefully equivocal language that Oppenheimer is, more probably than not, tied up with Russia, but that it might be difficult to prove. So the best thing is to brand him publicly and leave him to his ivory tower, the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton.

The calculated restraint has paid handsome dividends. It has prevented rioting among the hired hands, i.e., the scientists, which would have been inevitable if the charge of treason had been made explicit. It has established the idea of Oppenheimer's "guilt" in the public imagination, while avoiding the inconvenience and difficulty of a legitimate trial.

IN THE Roman trial, the judge-extensor who wrote the sentence needed a clause invalidating the certificate Cardinal Bellarmine gave to Galileo, but he knew it was a judicial howler and cleverly tucked it away in an inconspicuous context. The Florentine Inquisitor who read the sentence to the assembled literati had strict orders from the Holy Office not to let the text out of his hands, and in fact no authentic copy of it was unearthed until a century later. The chairman of the AEC, pleased with what he had produced, released his utterance to the press.

Why has the admiral tied this millstone around his neck? If we were to read that Dr. Watson had turned on Sherlock Holmes and torn him to pieces with his bare hands, we would all realize that Holmes had said "Elementary, my dear Watson," just once too often. In this case, the fateful word may have been spoken the time the admiral went before a Congressional committee to prevent medical isotopes from being shipped to Europe on the familiar ground of military security; Oppenheimer's devastating analysis of the argument may have been the last straw for Strauss. Or there may have been a number of such occasions. Vengeance, as they say in Corsica, is a dish that is best eaten cold.

'Overall Commonsense Judgment'

Here again, the authorities of three centuries ago seem to have been considerably more perceptive than the modern ones. Then as now, the basic issue was personal. The Pope had been made to look like a fool in matters of philosophy. The admiral had been made to look like a fool in matters of national security. Urban VIII, however, was not a petty man, and he gave signs of embarrassment both during and after the trial. His bent for authority and for a spectacular showdown has

obliterated for posterity the merits of a man who otherwise showed himself intelligent, open-minded, and far from ungenerous. He was, as Sacheverell Sitwell calls him, the last Latin poet. Also, he recognized the strength of Galileo's intellect, even if he could not grasp his ideas.

He was the bewildered victim of a scientific revolution that was beyond his comprehension. As a result, the Catholic Church remained obdurate in her negative position for two centuries, while modern science was establishing itself around her, and inevitably against her. It was only in 1822 that the Vatican made up its mind to take the name of Galileo off the Index. And since the Roman authorities could never bring themselves to revise the trial itself, a campaign of innuendoes and absurdities has had to go on to this day. This administrative obduracy does less than justice to the role played in the affair by an important part of the Church. In 1633 there were monks, prelates, and even cardinals who fought sacrificially for Galileo's point of view and defended his good name against all denunciations. And modern Catholic historians have done outstanding work in pointing out trial irregularities.

IN BOTH cases the authorities' mistaken zeal served to weaken the institutions they were trying to defend. Father Castelli had warned the Inquisitors before the Galileo trial —and got himself banished for his pains—that "if this holy and supreme tribunal did not proceed in the manner that is due, it would work damage to the reputation and reverence owed to it, and that, if they prosecuted a man who had written so modestly, reverently, and reservedly, it would mean that others would henceforth write brutally and resolutely."

A similar "overall commonsense judgment" was expressed by Dr. Rabi: ". . . the suspension of the clearance of Dr. Oppenheimer was a very unfortunate thing and should not have been done. In other words, there he was; he is a consultant, and if you don't want to consult the guy, you don't consult him, period. Why [do] you have to then proceed to suspend clearance and go through all this sort of thing? He is only there when called, and that is all there was to it. So it didn't seem to me the sort of thing that called for this kind of proceeding at all against a man who had accomplished what Dr. Oppenheimer has accomplished. There is a real positive record, the way I expressed it to a friend of mine. We have an A-bomb and a whole series of it, ***[the asterisks indicate a "security" deletion] and what more do you want, mermaids? This is just a tremendous achievement. If the end of that road is this kind of hearing, which can't help but be humiliating, I thought it was a pretty bad show. I still think so."

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Turkey: Menderes Gambles on Time

CLAIRE STERLING

ANKARA

TURKEY'S ARMY is the biggest in NATO, the best on the shores of the Mediterranean, and by far the strongest in the Middle East—and the Turks are not afraid to use it. But their economy is falling to pieces, they have just emerged from a national election still bitterly divided, and now the Soviet satellization of Syria has added 490 miles to the already long frontier they must be prepared to defend against the Russians. Can we count on them to defend it?

Western observers here think we can. No other nation, they say, has a clearer view of Soviet imperialism or a firmer will to resist it, and no amount of domestic trouble would be likely to affect that. Nevertheless, the fact remains that the Turks are getting deeper into an economic and political muddle every day, while the Soviet threat to their security is growing.

The economic problem is an old one. Although in late November the Turkish government did take steps to fix prices and to increase domestic supplies throughout the country, its general policy since 1954 had tended to let inflation run its course. For most of that time, the Turks have been without, or nearly without, butter, cheese, meat, and coffee; foreign merchandise—clothing and household goods, cosmetics, paper, ink—has disappeared from the shops; factories have been closing down or running only a day or two a week for want of raw materials and spare parts; and the general shortage of imported supplies has been so acute that forty per cent of Istanbul's taxis are immobilized for lack of new tires.

The circle has been classically vicious. With the government spending too much too fast for public development, prices have steadily risen. Accordingly, the value of the Turkish lira has steadily declined. The more it has declined, the less disposed peasants have been to sell on the domestic market, preferring to smuggle their produce into Syria for payment in gold and sew the gold into their mattresses. The less they've sold domestically, the worse the shortages; the higher the prices, the lower the lira, which, though still at an official rate of 2.80 to the dollar, is now around thirteen or fourteen on the black market.

At the same time, the deterioration of Turkish currency has made foreign trade more and more difficult. The country has thus been forced into excessive foreign borrowing—its debt has run up to $1.2 billion, four times the value of annual exports. The more Turkey has borrowed, the less able it has been to pay, so that its sources of credit are nearly exhausted. With its credit all but gone, Turkey has been unable to import even the most elementary materials needed to keep the economy going. Indeed, it might have stopped going entirely by now but for the $135 million worth of U.S. handouts this year.

IN SPITE of all this, Menderes has been going ahead stubbornly—by borrowing still more from Turkish banks and printing still more currency—with the development program he began when he took office in 1950. "Progress," one of his aides remarked recently, "must not be sacrificed to stability." But Menderes is no longer making the progress he made during his first four years in office, when he almost doubled industrial production. Though the government is going on with its development projects, many of them are stalled because of the critical lack of supply, while others are suffering from pork-barreling. One notable case is a new sugar factory at Erzurum, which operated only seven days this year because it is generally too cold there to grow sugar beets, and the only means of transporting them in is a single-track railroad that must transport everything else as well. Erzurum is the home town of a very influential deputy. Another example is the remote southern port of Mersin, now being greatly enlarged, though nobody can imagine why. Mersin, too, is the home town of a very influential deputy.

Because there are a good number of influential deputies in Turkey, the government's development program has come to be regarded in some circles as a kind of parliamentary welfare fund, and several cabinet ministers have been known to dip personally into this fund. Two years ago four of them were forced to resign for allegedly doing so but were later cleared of such charges by a parliamentary investigatory committee. Three are now back in the cabinet, but the government's once high reputation for honesty and courage has gradually veered toward one for dishonesty and corruption.

A Film Run Backwards

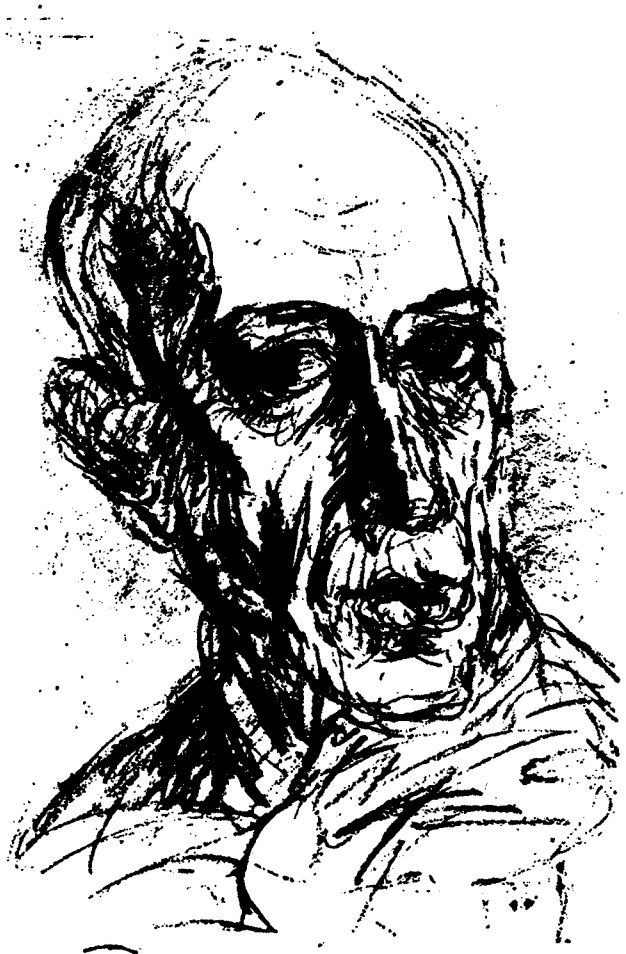
These developments made it inevitable that the public that had once acclaimed Menderes would turn against him. Just as inevitably in a country so new to democracy, Menderes took to suppressing his opponents with a rigor that has grown in proportion to the opposition.

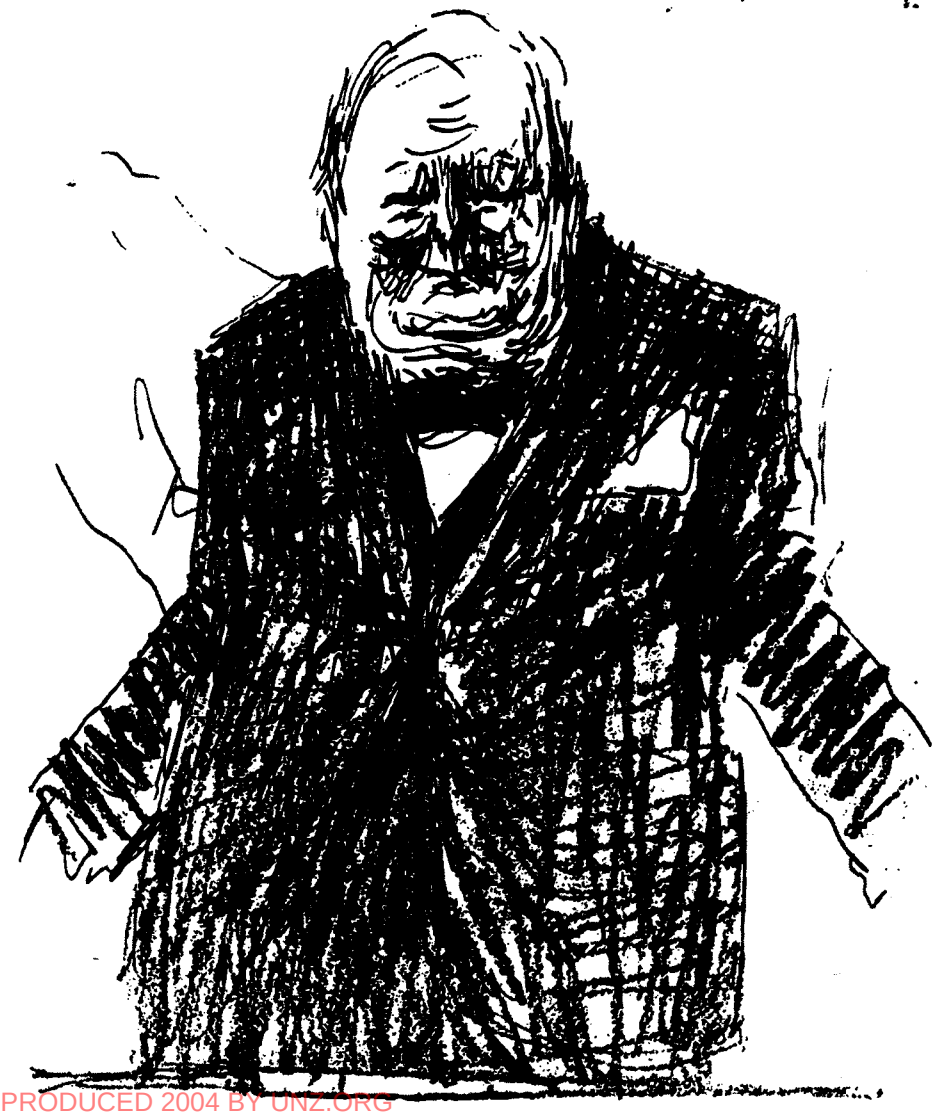
Turkey's experience with the democratic process has been limited to the eleven years since Ismet Inönü, who inherited the mantle of Kemal Atatürk, voluntarily bestowed a free-election system on his country. The system wasn't entirely free—a fact that Inönü now has cause to regret, since he could be in power again today if it were. But it was free enough to get his Republican Party thrown out by a landslide vote in 1950.

In the freshness of their triumph over the Republicans, the Menderes forces behaved impeccably. By 1954,

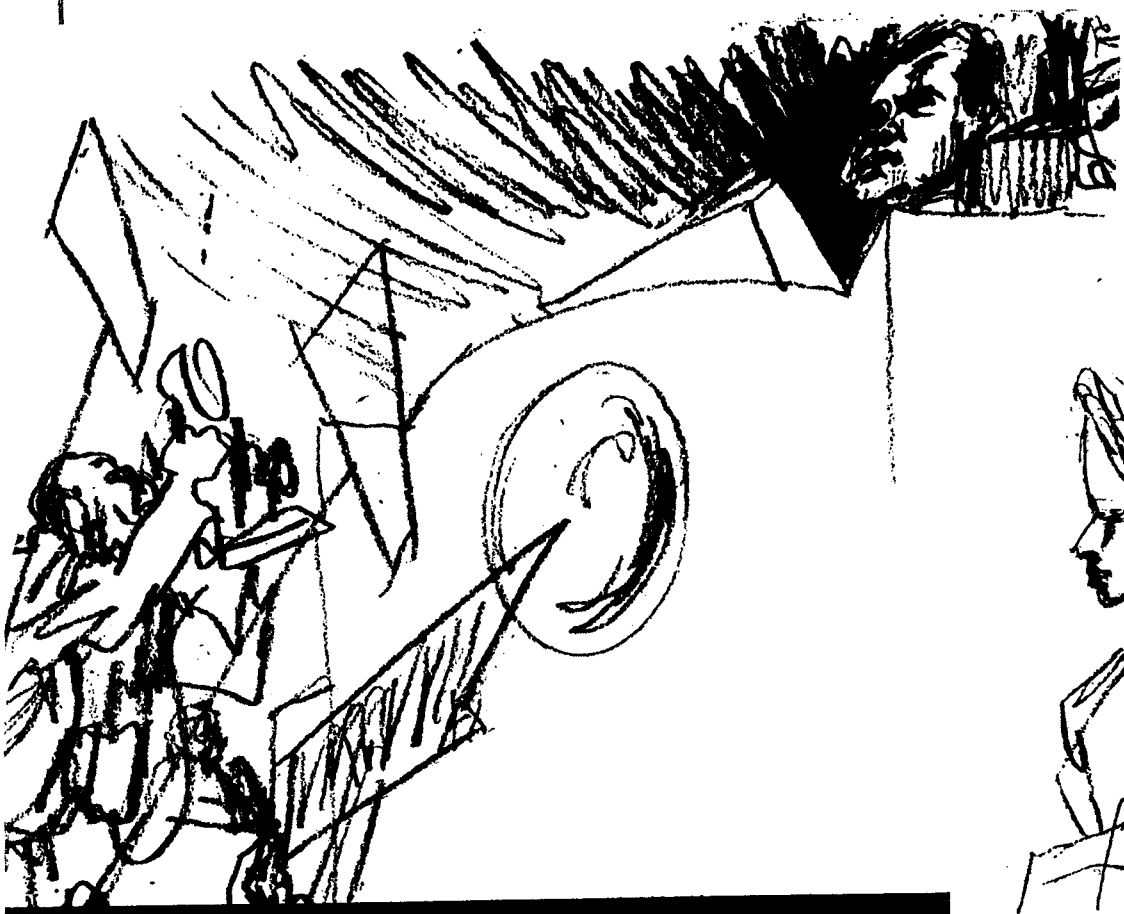
(Continued on page 22)

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED





PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



TOPOLSKI's CHRONICLE

I. Portraits of the Age

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

however, they had begun to slip back into the habits that have kept Turkish jails populated with political prisoners for centuries. The first sign of this was a press law passed that year which imposed prison terms of up to three years and fines of several thousand dollars on anyone who used the press or radio to insult the honor or dignity of government officials, or who invaded or threatened to invade private and family life, offended the "moral personality" of the Grand National Assembly and the state, or in effect simply alarmed the public. Two years later, this law was amended to punish any writer, editor, or publisher who "might imply" or "give the impression of" attacking the reputation of a public figure; the minimum penalties were doubled and others were upgraded according to the rank of the insulted official.

There are few writers, editors, or publishers of any note in Turkey who haven't been convicted under this law. Inönü's son-in-law, for instance, was recently released from jail after serving seven months and twenty-three days for insulting a former minister of state. The general secretary of the Republican Party, Kasim Gulek, has been arrested twelve times in seven years for similar offenses.

These methods served only to stiffen the opposition, and Menderes has fallen back into other habits reminiscent of the Ottoman Empire, particularly in his attempts to bring about a religious revival. While ninety-nine per cent of Turks are Moslem, religion as such has played no part in Turkish politics since Kemal Atatürk decisively separated church from state in the 1920's. Millions of Turks regard this as one of his greatest achievements because, with a single stroke, he built a bridge across several centuries into the twentieth; and Menderes's appeal to the most backward imams in the country—he ran in last October's election on the slogan of having rebuilt thousands of mosques throughout the land—has been profoundly resented here. "We have come a long way since Atatürk persuaded us to cast off the veil and fez," says the editor of a liberal weekly. "But now the film is being run backwards."

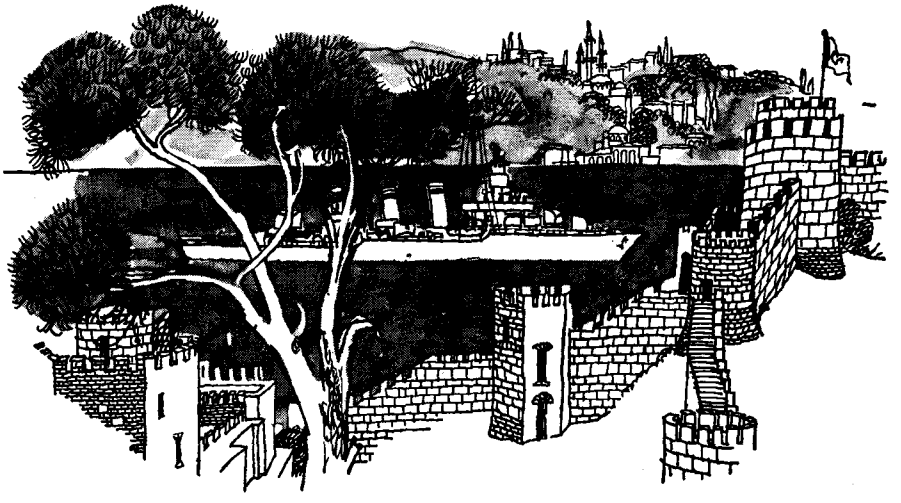
'They Owed Us an Election'

While it had been clear for some time that the Turks were turning against Menderes, no one knew how many of them had done so until the October 27 election. Menderes himself was apparently confident of victory, having chosen a moment when the peasants—eighty per cent of the population—were bound to be pleased by a bumper harvest. Nevertheless, he took the precaution of adjusting the election law so as to make the victory sure.

The law was already in his favor, because it gave all the seats in any given province to the party winning a simple plurality over any other single party. Lest Turkey's three opposition parties unite to deprive him of the plurality, Menderes got a new law passed on September 11, forbidding any candidate to run on a party ticket not his own, and requiring all parties to file full lists of candidates in every province where they were organized.

As a result, the Menderes Democrats won 424 seats, or 69.5 per cent of the total, in the new parliament, as against 178 for the Republicans and four each for the Nation Party and the Freedom Party. Actually, however, the Democrats got only forty-eight per cent of the popular vote. The opposition in Turkey today is in the majority.

For all anyone knows, the majority may be appreciably bigger than this percentage indicates. Kasim Gulek claims the Republicans alone really won more than three hundred seats, although the smaller opposition parties make more modest claims. In any case, a string of serious post-election riots in Gaziantep, Mersin, Samsun, and Kayseri—where nineteen people were wounded—suggests that a good many Turks think the government cheated. Indeed, an unusually candid Democrat practically admitted as much to me. "The Republicans fixed the first election, in 1946," he said. "They owed us one."



The Republicans did fix the 1946 election, and it is this aspect of their politics that the Turks find most discouraging. For more than half a century, there have been valiant patriots fighting for authentic democracy in Turkey. Time and again they have won only to see the party they backed turning sour on the things they had fought for. Time and again, therefore, they have been forced to support the old enemy against the new. "It's no good," says a former Democrat who voted Republican in October, "to offer a choice between an ex-dictator and a dictator. But what else could we do?"

Whatever the Republican Party's previous record, however, there isn't much doubt that it now represents a large and angry portion of the Turkish people, that it intends to speak energetically for these people, and that it will accordingly generate as much unrest in the country as there are ingredients for such unrest at hand. "We will not let Menderes forget for a moment," says Kasim Gulek, "that he has no moral, mathematical, or political right to be prime minister. We do not, of course, say he has no legal right to the job, since by saying so we would be criminally liable under the law."

Whatever their disagreements in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

domestic matters, the Turks are wholly in agreement on foreign affairs: they are unequivocally pro-western. No one even raised the issue in the tumultuous October elections. But the question isn't so much whether they would stand up to Russia in their own and our behalf as how well they would do so—particularly now, with the Russians assuming a menacing posture along their frontiers.

The Indispensable Ally

Standing at Russia's gateway to the Mediterranean and barring Russia with its army of half a million men from some of the biggest oil fields in the Middle East, Turkey has long been a key to the western defense system in this critical part of the world. Now that the Russians have penetrated so deeply into the area, Turkey has become an indispensable ally.

Most of the world knows now that the Turks hadn't the remotest intention of invading Syria in September and October, when Khrushchev was maintaining so indignantly that they did. At no time during these two months did they have more than fifty thousand troops—a tenth of their standing army—on the Syrian border. But they might reasonably have asked whether the Syrians—or the Russians—had any intentions of attacking *them*, with Khrushchev talking of overrunning Turkey in a day, with Marshal Konstantin Rokossovsky sent down to take over the Caucasus command, and with the Russians stockpiling far more weapons in Syria than the Syrian Army could conceivably use. It was also reported that they had completed in Syria six new jet airfields, with four more under construction, to defend a territory smaller than Nebraska, and constructed, near Latakia, a torpedo-boat base for a country without a navy.

OMINOUS as these signs may be, the Turks don't really think they are in danger of imminent invasion. They know that the western powers could not afford to let Turkey be overrun in a day, a month, or a year, and for all the martial noises coming out of Moscow, they don't believe the Soviet Union is prepared to start a third world war at the moment.

At the same time, however, they are very well aware of the fact that if war should come, they would now have to cope with the Red Army in Bulgaria to the north, in the Caucasus to the northeast, and in Syria to the south. Furthermore, because they straddle the Dardanelles and block the way to the Iraqi and Arabian oil fields, they would inevitably, in the event of war, be one of the Red Army's primary targets. Even for a country seemingly without any nerves, it is an unnerving prospect.

Whether because the Turks really have no nerves or merely because they like to give that impression, it is hard to find any Turk in Ankara who will admit to being worried. They have tremendous confidence in their army and its well over a billion dollars' worth of American equipment; and while they are occasionally disturbed by the vagaries of the State Department, they have implicit faith in America. "The Sputniks," says a high official of the Turkish Foreign Office, "are the bows and arrows of tomorrow. You Americans will find something to top them."

None of this, however, can alter the fact that Turkey is being debilitated internally by economic and political problems, and a lot of people would be happier—especially some in the Pentagon—if the Turks could find some way to straighten out their affairs.

There is always the chance, of course, that Menderes will finally apply drastic measures to check inflation, now that he is more or less sure of staying in power for another four years. His recent actions—freezing the export, purchase, sale, or transfer of cotton and fixing the prices of foodstuffs—indicate that he is paying heed to criticism by the opposition. Should he agree, for instance, to cut back on public investments and to stop borrowing, the State Department would probably reconsider the $300-million loan which he has been requesting for three years and which it has so far regretfully refused. These remedies, simultaneously applied, could reduce the crisis to controllable dimensions.

A Time to Wait?

But Menderes still insists that the country can ride out the crisis until such time as his most ambitious development projects begin to pay off. The idea isn't entirely unfeasible, provided the country can hold out that long. Several of the government's plans for Turkey's industrialization might pay off very well some day, and there is a new project under consideration that could add a lot to the country's well-being.

As an aftermath of last year's Suez crisis, both Iran and Iraq have been thinking of building huge new pipelines that would by-pass Syria and terminate in Turkey. The Iranian line, presently being negotiated in Ankara, would mean Turkish royalties of at least $10 million a year; and the Iraqi line might—if Iraq can overcome the qualms created by this fall's Turco-Syrian crisis—bring in twice that amount. This alone would not be a decisive sum. But along with the pipelines would come refineries, petrochemical industries, shipping, and increased trade. Plans are already being made to create a free port for the Iranians at Iskenderun, on the southern Turkish coast, with a through highway and railroad linking it to Baghdad. Taken all together, this kind of development could be a godsend.

It will be years, however, before the pipelines can be finished, if they are ever begun. In the interval, time does not seem to be on the side of the Turks—and the Russians are looking at them with a peculiarly jaundiced eye.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Soil Bank Deserves a Better Trial

CARROLL KILPATRICK

WITH OR WITHOUT Ezra Taft Benson as Secretary of Agriculture, the Republicans are almost certain to suffer additional losses in the farm states in the 1958 Congressional elections.

The trouble is, as Mr. Benson has said, that there has been a "technological explosion" on American farms—an explosion which has helped make possible the high American standard of living but which at the same time has forced millions of persons to leave the farms. The Census Bureau estimates that more than 1.8 million persons left the farms between April, 1956, and April, 1957—the largest year's exodus on record—and that the farm population in the last seven years has declined by 4.7 million.

As in other fields, government policy has not kept up with scientific developments. Even with $5 billion at his disposal—the largest agricultural budget in history—the Secretary of Agriculture has been unable to protect those who have remained from a severe price-cost squeeze. The prospect is for a tighter squeeze in the months ahead.

Almost two years ago, President Eisenhower proposed the soil bank as a major answer to the farm problem. He said it would "help remove the crushing burden of surpluses" and "harmonize agricultural production with peacetime markets." His claims were conservative compared with some politicians' "solutions" to the farm problem.

But the President failed to take fully into account a basic fact about modern American agriculture: since 1930, output per man-hour on the farm has increased at a greater rate than in manufacturing. Despite the movement to the cities, farm production has been increasing steadily and was at a record high in 1957. With the current emphasis on research and with the improved technologies being introduced, even more impressive achievements may be expected in the next few years.

Since the end of the First World War, surplus has been the chief agricultural problem in this country, as in many other advanced countries. Surpluses are a problem because they depress farm prices and leave the farmer holding the bag. Despite a growing population, they are almost certain to remain the major farm problem at least until 1975, perhaps much longer.

New Woodlands and Grasslands

Farm economists have estimated that every time the total production increases by one per cent, prices paid to farmers fall by three or four per cent. (Because of increased costs of storage, shipping, processing, and distribution, prices to the consumer have moved steadily higher.) The effect of surplus and declining income has been to drive many farm families into the city and to make many of those who have remained on the farm dependent upon part-time city jobs.

When the President presented his soil-bank program to Congress in January, 1956, both parties supported it with enthusiasm. It was unquestionably sound in principle. In approving it, Congress authorized $750 million annually for the acreage-reserve feature—to pay producers of wheat, corn, cotton, rice, and tobacco for acreage taken out of production of these surplus crops. It also authorized $450 million annually for the conservation-reserve feature—the long-range soil-bank program designed to encourage farmers to retire land for an agreed number of years and to keep the land in grass or trees.

Secretary Benson has referred to the soil bank and the foreign surplus-disposal program as "probably . . . the two biggest and most expensive operations in the history of agriculture." But have they brought results—the one designed to curtail production by taking land out of use and the other to dispose of surpluses in government storage bins?

The answer is that they have been useful. Without them, there could have been a severe farm depression. But they have been palliatives only. Mr. Benson has claimed that because of the soil-bank acreage reserve in 1957, "We have about 175 million bushels less wheat than otherwise we would have had—about 225 million bushels less corn—two million bales less cotton—and over six million hundredweight less rice."

He said these figures prove that "the soil bank has been a real contribution this year in relieving the surplus problem"—almost like saying that a 100,000-man reduction in the Soviet Army would mean real disarmament.

The problem is much greater than the Secretary's optimistic statement would indicate. In addition, he credited crop reductions to the soil bank that might more accurately be attributed to drought in the Great Plains and heavy rains and floods in the South.

A LOOK at the production figures will put the problem in better perspective. The November, 1957, crop report said 1957 was another record crop year. The corn crop of 3.3 billion bushels was seven per cent above the 1946-1955 average. Soybean production was eighty-one per cent above average. Milk production in October was one per cent above October, 1956, and nine per cent above the October average for 1946-1955.

Because of rains and floods and the soil bank, the cotton crop was down by about eleven per cent, but the 1957 cotton yield per acre was almost forty per cent greater than the 1946-1955 average. Wheat production was down about six per cent from 1956 and about eighteen per

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cent from the average—partly because of the soil bank but more because of the severe drought in the Great Plains. Now that the drought is broken, the outlook is for a superabundant wheat crop in 1958.

The 1957 drop in wheat output was more than compensated for by the increase in other grain crops, notably sorghum. Many farmers who had taken land out of corn and wheat put it into other grains.

There was good news on one crop: rice. Production was down ten per cent from 1956 and five per cent below the average.

Running Hog-wild

Gains in per-acre yield have kept crop production at or near record levels despite the soil bank and all other production limitations that Congress and the administration have been able to devise. The fact is that neither has faced up to the magnitude of the problem. As Senator George D. Aiken of Vermont has said, we have kept too many people on farms, too many unproductive acres under cultivation, and too many farm units in operation. "We have done this simply by continually promising the uneconomic or inexperienced farmer that Congress is going to do something to solve his frequently unsolvable problems."

The movement away from the farms has not meant the development of corporate farms in this country but rather the strengthening of the family farm. The proportion of family farms to the total number has held steady in recent years. The trend is toward larger mechanized farms operated by a single family with little or no outside labor.

It is the increased efficiency of the family farm that presents the problem. For example, the carry-over of feed grains alone is now nearly forty-eight million tons, about double the carry-over of five years ago. This is a fact of disturbing political significance to the G.O.P. When feed grains have been abundant and relatively cheap, farmers have always produced more hogs to eat the grain. The Agriculture Department has estimated a seven per cent increase in pig production in the December-February quarter as compared with a year ago.

Top department officials have been out on the road urging farmers to reduce rather than expand their hog production. Hog prices, they have warned, are sure to drop if pig production is not drastically reduced at once.

In another attempt to discourage pig production, the Secretary of Agriculture went against his own principles to boost the price support for corn. In other words, he offered farmers an incentive to put corn into government storage bins rather than feed it to pigs. A cynic would say that the offer was made to try to save the Republicans in 1958. But Democrats did not complain, because they are for high price supports. Walter C. Berger, administrator of the Commodity Stabilization

Service, said the Secretary "really had no choice . . . under the circumstances. It was of first importance to take steps to stabilize the feed grain market now, and the hog market in the future."

All indications are that the Secretary's offer will not be accepted by a sufficient number of farmers to reverse the trend. The inevitable result will be a surplus of hogs in 1958, lower hog prices, and a scarcity of votes for Republicans in the traditionally Republican corn-hog states.

Besides the soil bank, Benson's major effort has been to reduce stocks on hand, which cost the U.S. about $1 million a day to store. In 1951, the stocks held by the government totaled $1.7 billion. By mid-1953, they had increased to a total of $3.5 billion. In mid-1955, the total stood at a whopping $7 billion. By early 1956, the maximum to date was reached—$8.9 billion.

Since mid-1956, stocks have been slowly reduced. They now stand at $6.8 billion. Progress has been encouraging, if modest, at a cost of nearly $4 billion. But, as Mr. Berger has said, "There is still a long, long way to go. The basic problems are still the same."

The new session of Congress must decide whether to keep the soil bank and the surplus-disposal program. There will be strong arguments against both at a time when pressures are mounting for cuts in the agricultural budget to find money for the defense program.

However, as Professor J. Carroll Bottum of Purdue recently told the Joint Economic Committee of Congress, "A soil bank program can be set up which will reduce farm output and increase farm income if the people of this country, Congress, and the administration desire it, and if Congress will pass and the administration will administer a program that meets certain fundamental requirements. The 1956 and 1957 soil bank programs did not meet these requirements."

Let's Tackle Fundamentals

Although the chief emphasis thus far has been on the short-range acreage reserve, whereby farmers retired some twenty million acres in 1957, a shift in emphasis to the conservation reserve is becoming evident. During 1957 only about seven million acres were put into the conservation reserve, the long-range feature that makes conservation practices possible.

It is the conservation reserve that ought to have the greatest emphasis in the future if production is to be cut to manageable proportions. Some farmers whose lands are poor should be encouraged to put their entire farms into the conservation reserve for a five- or ten-year period. (This is essentially the proposal put forward by the Committee for Economic Development on December 8.) Higher payments per acre may be required. Also, there must be restrictions to prevent a farmer from bringing into production as much land as he retires under the plan.

In an attempt to limit the high payments some farmers received under the acreage reserve, Congress in 1957 imposed a three-thousand-dollar-per-farm limitation. This has discouraged larger farmers, particularly

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the critical wheat and cotton states, from making maximum use of the soil bank. It should be repealed.

As for the long-range conservation reserve under the soil bank, the Department of Agriculture recently announced that it was going to experiment with a plan whereby farmers would submit their own terms for retiring land. This plan, if successful, would mean both that more land would be put into the conservation reserve and that the government would have some selection of that land.

THE NEW SESSION of Congress probably will be in no mood to examine seriously the realities of the farm problem despite pressure from Mr. Benson. Republicans will be on the defensive because of the unpopularity of the Benson price supports and acreage-limitation proposal. Democrats will be on the offensive, because they know that the anti-Benson crusade is popular and promises to pay dividends in November.

It would be a serious disservice to the country, however, if Congress should throw out the soil bank because it hasn't produced miracles in the short time it has been in operation. Its major weakness is that it has not been large enough in scope to meet the revolutionary technological changes and needs of American agriculture.

Congress should remember that the soil bank, inadequate as the present legislation has proved to be, is a step in the direction of fewer controls, less government fixing, and improved conservation. Above all, a soil bank that is properly financed and administered should make unnecessary the vast expenditures for price supports and surplus storage and disposal.

An effective soil bank, particularly an effective conservation reserve, should enable the farmer to protect his land until it is needed in an emergency or until there is another substantial population increase. It should also make it easier for marginal farmers to retire their acreages and move to the city. At least the soil bank is one way to deal with the huge surplus problems without imposing burdensome controls on the farmer and on the agricultural economy. It deserves a better trial.

France Finds Treasure In the Desert

JOHN H. LICHTBLAU

UNTIL less than a year ago many people, especially outside France, were still skeptical about the French government's enthusiastic claims of how much oil had suddenly been discovered in the Algerian Sahara. It was felt that the announcements on the subject were meant largely for home consumption, as an antidote to the flagging interest in maintaining French sovereignty in Algeria at any cost. Such statements as ex-Premier Guy Mollet's assertion that "Saharan oil, together with atomic energy, forms one of the foundations of our independence," or Saharan Affairs Minister Max Lejeune's claim that in less than a dozen years France—which now must import ninety-five per cent of the oil it requires—would be exporting more than it imported, were thought to be inspired by political rather than geological realities.

This is no longer the case. It is now clear that the Algerian part of the French Sahara is a major oil-bearing area. The current flurry of concession applications from big oil companies throughout the world is tangible proof of this new attitude among the professionals.

THERE IS plenty of room for the newcomers, because France has probably only scratched the surface in the five years since it began to interest itself seriously in the subsurface wealth of its North African territory. Yet it has already discovered three big oil fields—Hassi Messaoud, Edjélé, and Tinguentourine—and two major natural-gas fields, In Salah and Hassi R'Mel.

The reserves of these fields have not yet been fully determined, but Hassi Messaoud alone, the prize find up to now, is definitely known to have recoverable reserves of at least a hundred million tons and probably three hundred million tons (some very optimistic estimates have even mentioned the possibility of a billion tons). This is big even by

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Texas standards, where a field one-tenth that size would be considered a major discovery. In fact, the fabulous East Texas oil field, which is the biggest find ever made in a hundred years of U.S. oil prospecting, contains only about twice as much oil as will probably be recovered from Hassi Messaoud. Since the first oil discovery in an area rarely remains the only one, it can be safely predicted that the Sahara will be a major oil-producing center within half a dozen years, though, of course, not on the scale of Texas, the Middle East, Venezuela, or the Volga-Ural area.

One Key for Many Doors

The implications of all this for France are tremendously important. There are two great drains on France's economy. The first is its foreign-trade deficit, which this year is expected to amount to $1.2 billion. Fully two-thirds of this deficit is accounted for by imports of oil and coal, which are bound to rise until and unless France can develop additional domestic fuel sources on a large scale. Eventually, atomic energy may provide the answer, but in the more immediate future France's only hope of reducing its rising energy imports lies in Saharan oil. According to Minister Lejeune, Saharan oil production will amount to eleven million tons by 1960 and twenty-five million tons by 1962. This would be equivalent respectively to one-third and two-thirds of all French crude-oil imports projected for these two years and would, together with the modest but rising oil production in metropolitan France, make the country nearly self-sufficient in the short space of five years. The foreign-exchange savings would amount to almost $500 million in 1962 alone.

The other big drain on France's economic resources is the Algerian struggle. For 1957, military expenditures in Algeria will amount to something like $1 billion. The question of whether France can afford to keep Algeria is therefore beginning to be asked with increased frequency among French taxpayers. So far, only the large Communist Party and the small group around Pierre Mendès-France—each for a very different reason—are publicly supporting Algerian independence. But the mounting costs of the war are beginning to provide the Communists with a far better argument than all their anti-colonialist rhetoric.

In this situation, the Saharan oil discoveries come as a godsend to all those supporting the principle of permanent French sovereignty over Algeria. For now one of their major arguments is that the Algeria of the future will be one of the mainstays of the French economy, providing it with all its oil, plus some twelve million tons of iron ore per year from the newly discovered deposits near Tindouf.

In the international field, it is hoped that Saharan oil will soon end France's distasteful and politically dangerous dependence on the Middle East and Colonel Nasser's Suez Canal. As a principal supporter of Algerian independence, Nasser has, on several occasions, suggested through his radio and press that Iraq, whence France receives the bulk of its oil supplies, should engage in an anti-French boycott as a gesture of solidarity with the Algerian rebels. The significance of this threat was brought home by the 1956 Suez crisis. It is therefore argued that it is not only necessary for France to stay in Algeria in order to have access to Saharan oil; it is equally necessary to have access to Saharan oil in order to stay in Algeria.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that all these points have an impact on popular French thinking on the Algerian problem. They are reflected in the eagerness with which the public, including many small investors, is buying up the stock issues of the new ventures that are formed almost daily to participate in the Saharan oil search. Such zeal as was displayed in October, when a fifteen-billion-franc stock issue for a new venture was oversubscribed within two hours, with up to five hundred people waiting in line in front of some banks, is not exactly typical of the French investing public. Yet it has been typical of nearly all Saharan oil issues since 1956.

The French authorities are now trying to consolidate this confidence by rushing ahead to bring in the first tangible results of the Saharan oil discoveries. They are building a six-inch "baby pipeline" from Hassi Messaoud to a railroad terminal a hundred miles north. The project is expensive as well as uneconomic, particularly since it is only a temporary affair. Furthermore, the quantity of oil it will eventually carry, half a million tons per year, will be an insignificant fraction of France's total oil needs. But if it can be completed and start its flow on schedule, it would mean that from next January on, Saharan oil would actually be delivered to French refineries. It seems clear that the psychological impact would be worth the cost and effort.

In the longer run, France plans to build a major pipeline from Hassi Messaoud to the Algerian seaport of Bougie, and the Edjélé and Tinguentourine fields are to be connected to either the Tunisian port of Gabès or a Libyan port near Tripoli. Normally, France would give preference for the latter project to Tunisia, which belongs to the French franc zone. And, normally, Tunisia would be eager to have the pipeline, since it would provide both transit royalties and a cheap source of fuel, something Tunisia now lacks almost completely. But the political aspects of the Algerian conflict may so distort normal economic considerations that Tunisia, which officially supports the Algerian rebels, may have to refuse France permission to build the pipeline on its soil; or France may feel that in view of Tunisia's political commitments, it may be less risky to build the line through Libya. French negotiations on the project with both countries have just started.

Oil and Blood on the Sand

How much oil will actually flow through any French pipeline while the Algerian fighting goes on is very much a matter of speculation. If the Algerian National Liberation Front, the F.L.N., has anything to say about it, there will be none. In fact, sabotaging France's oil activities in the Sahara has now become one of the F.L.N.'s key objectives. This is stated quite clearly in the declaration issued in October by the F.L.N.'s Coordinating and Execution Committee. It states that "After having created last summer the Saharan Front, the F.L.N. is now extending

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

this front, affirming the preponderance of its military initiatives in this terrain. Thereby, the Co-ordinating and Execution Committee intends to demonstrate the willingness of our people not to let themselves be robbed—by a brigandism of more or less international character—of the riches of Algeria. The prospectors for the black gold must not forget that they must reckon with us."

The declaration was followed within two weeks by the first attack on oil personnel working in the Sahara. The victims were members of a geophysical survey crew of the Compagnie des Pétroles d'Algérie, owned partly by the French government and partly by Royal Dutch-Shell. According to the reports, five civilians and nine Foreign Legion guards were killed during two ambushes.

Even before that, the rebels boasted of a sortie on Edjélé from a base just inside Libya that started a fire at one of the wells. The French say the fire was due to an accident.

The F.L.N. expects to greatly expand this type of action in the coming months. It has formed a special oil committee, part of whose function will be to direct sabotage activities against all Saharan oil installations. It believes that its main chance will come when the first pipeline has been completed. Then the rebels hope to take a leaf out of Syria's book and "interpose" themselves between the oil wells and the sea terminal. I was told this by no less an authority than Tunisian President Habib Bourguiba, who is very close to the F.L.N. leadership and often acts as their international spokesman. He predicted that not a drop of Sarahan oil would leave Algeria for the duration of the conflict, since the rebels could be expected to cut the pipelines as fast as they could be repaired. There is little likelihood that the F.L.N. will be able to live up fully to this prediction. French oil officials concede that the rebels will be able to disrupt the oil flow to some extent, but since France has an army of five hundred thousand men in Algeria, they believe that sabotage can be controlled enough to permit a regular and substantial outflow of oil. A plan has been advanced to build twin high-tension wire fences along most of the 430 miles of pipeline between Hassi Messaoud and the sea, station a detachment of soldiers at each pumping station, and keep the pipeline under continual observation by planes and mobile patrols.

Such a plan, or any other if carried out on a large enough scale, might well reduce rebel activities against the oil transport to a "nuisance value," one F.L.N. leader admitted to me privately. However, it would create a general atmosphere of fear and insecurity, hardly conducive to the development of a large-scale commercial enterprise like the production and transportation of millions of tons of oil. Besides, it would make Saharan oil a very costly proposition for the French taxpayer, who would have to foot the bill for all such special security measures.

Nevertheless, the oil companies are not greatly upset at the prospect of rebel activities. They are confident that the Algerian conflict will be terminated one way or the other within the next two or three years. They are not at all sure which side will win, but they do know that whoever is the future master of Algeria will want to see the maximum production and exportation of oil. Even if the Algerians should win full independence, they will still have to let the foreign oil companies do the job, since they themselves would be neither technically nor financially able to take over. Furthermore, since the world oil supply can be expected to remain abundant, barring a major war, an independent Algeria would find it difficult to maintain large-scale oil production without an assured French market.

France, it can be assumed, would be willing to buy Saharan oil even if it came from a non-French Algeria: because of the much shorter distance it would have to travel, transportation costs would be lower than for oil from the Persian Gulf. Furthermore, even an independent Algeria could be expected to remain, at least initially, in the French franc zone, as Tunisia and Morocco have done, thus saving France from paying foreign exchange for its oil imports.

The U.S. Companies Move In . . .

It is this confidence of the oil firms that they will come out on top no matter who wins, since they hold the key to Algeria's economic future, that has accounted for the influx of French and more recently of American oil companies into the Sahara. Not unexpectedly, the entry of the latter has set off a flurry of political reactions that are likely to put them squarely in the middle of another fight between Arab nationalism and a European colonial power. Both sides in the struggle expect to use the presence of the U.S. concerns on the scene for their own purposes.

The French were not always eager to let in American or other foreign companies (with the exception of Royal Dutch-Shell, which has been in there all along). Less than a year ago, a French government spokesman declared that American companies would be called in only if the oil deposits turned out to be too big for France to handle alone. Though this has hardly been the case as yet, the French are now so eager for U.S. participation that they sent the head of their oil office to the United States to drum up interest for the Saharan venture. So far, Cities Service, Sinclair Oil, Phillips Petroleum, Newmont Mining, Tidewater Oil, and the Texas Eastern Transmission Company have officially announced that they would like to go into the Sahara.

Although this might appear to be a very good beginning, it has disappointed the French, who had hoped to interest some of the five international giants of the U.S. oil industry —Esso, Standard of California, Gulf Oil, Socony Mobil, Texaco. According to current trade talks, Esso may come in by next spring.

. . . but France Sets the Terms

The method by which American or any other oil concerns enter the Saharan oil drama is based upon a French law under which all companies holding exploration licenses must return half of their territory to the government after five years. This deadline has now been reached for some of the concessions held by Shell and the French government oil companies. Of course, the oil companies can pick the territory that they return to the government. This means that few if any sites where oil has actually been discovered or where there are definite indications that oil is present will be surren-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dered. But returned concession areas adjacent to sites where oil has been found are also considered very attractive, particularly since the surrendering concern also supplies any geological information it has obtained on the lapsing concession.

Exploration licenses for all concessions (which can be turned into long-term exploitation licenses if oil is found) can be requested by any bona fide oil company which can prove that it has the means to develop them. The final decision is made in each case by the Bureau de Recherches de Pétrole, a French government agency that is also an important shareholder in most of the oil companies already in the Sahara or now trying to get in. The B.R.P. has not yet acted on any of the new concession applications. But it has let it be officially known that it would reject any application from a foreign concern that had not formed a partnership with French interests. Furthermore, foreign holdings in such a partnership would have to be limited to fifty per cent. In order to comply, American companies have now gone into business with such French concerns as the Suez Canal Company, Rothschild Frères, Lazard Frères, and, in most cases, with the government's B.R.P.

THERE ARE various reasons for France's sudden interest in American participation in the Sahara. Some are based on the fact that U.S. oil companies have the best equipment and the most experienced personnel for oil prospecting. Thus they can spare France the need to hire high-salaried foreign technicians and spend dollars on equipment made only in the United States.

Another factor is the marketability of the oil. Most of the big refineries and marketing organizations in western Europe are in the hands of the major international concerns. They can get all the oil they need from the Middle East, where they have their own production. Unless they are in on the oil produced in the Sahara, they may not purchase it.

But the French think it also makes good political sense to let the U.S. oil companies join in the Saharan search. Since nearly all the U.S. ventures will have French government participation via the B.R.P., it will make them direct partners. Though they have not expressed themselves publicly, many French officials and businessmen connected with Saharan affairs privately think that such a partnership would commit the U.S. oil companies fully on the side of France in Algeria, since it would give them a direct stake in the maintenance of French authority over the area. These circles hope that this interest would have an effect on the State Department's approach to the Algerian question similar to that which American oil operations in the Middle East have on U.S. policy there.

An Insatiable Octopus?

Not everyone in France agrees with this strategy. To a good many Frenchmen, the mental image of a foreign oil company is still that of an insatiable octopus. They are convinced that the Americans would soon squeeze all French oil interests —and eventually France itself—out of Algeria and make it another Saudi Arabia. French officials who have direct experience with U.S. and British companies reject this as a naïve and very exaggerated notion of the political power of the international oil industry. Since the Americans, and also the British, are evidently quite eager to get into the Sahara, these officials believe it is better to let them in now under French terms than to block them arbitrarily from exploiting this rich new area. Excluding them would only play into the hands of the rebels, who are eager to make common cause with anyone who, for whatever reason, wants to get the French out of Algeria.

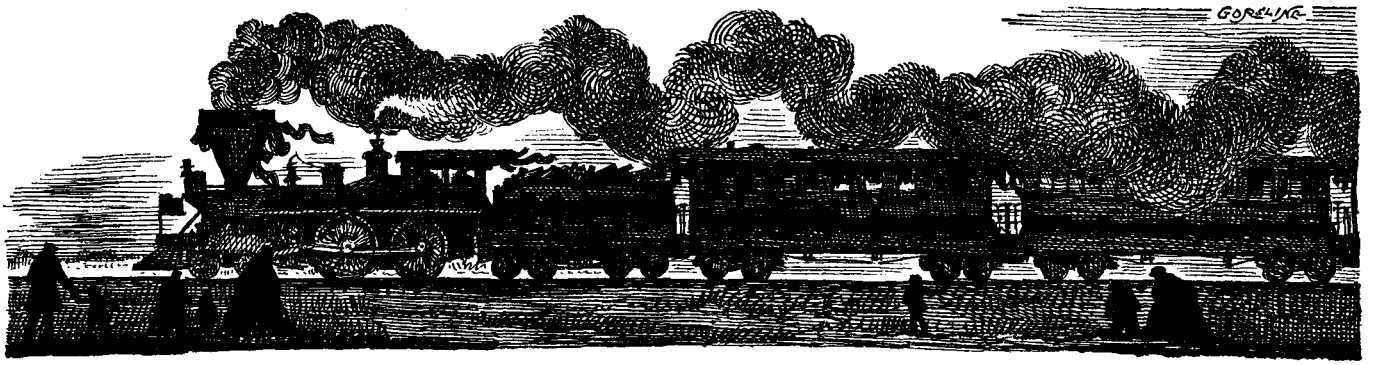
IN FACT, there are plenty of rumors, both in Paris and in North Africa, that the rebels have already offered some big foreign companies future concessions in return for present financial and political support. A short while ago, the French press reported that evidence of such a deal with the U.S.-owned Aramco had been found in the possession of F.L.N. chief Mohammed ben Bella, who was arrested in Algeria after the French forced down the plane on which he was traveling from Tunis to Morocco. The "evidence" was never published and the government soon played down that part of the ben Bella incident, although it was given new prominence when repeated before a U.S. Congressional committee by that self-appointed fighter against U.S. foreign involvement, Hamilton Fish. If any "evidence" did exist, it could only have been an unintelligent forgery, since Aramco is limited by its charter to operations in Saudi Arabia.

Whether the F.L.N. has actually started secret talks with any foreign oil company is, of course, not known. However, its repeated insistence that it would not consider itself bound by any of the French concession agreements, once it took over in Algeria, is probably meant to encourage such talks.

THERE IS NO DOUBT that the American and other foreign firms that are going into the Sahara strictly for business reasons sincerely hope to be able to stay out of the area's political entanglements. If an early compromise can be reached between France and the F.L.N., which is still not impossible, their hope may be fulfilled. If not, they will find themselves in the middle of an increasingly bloody conflict in which their equipment will be sabotaged and some of their employees will be killed.

If and when that happens, it is likely to have political and diplomatic repercussions far beyond the confines of the oil industry.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



VIEWS & REVIEWS

This Year Of Such Great Change

WILLIAM HARLAN HALE

THIS YEAR they put USS *Wisconsin,* the last of our battleships, away in mothballs, and the life-adjusters in education followed it soon after into oblivion. This was a year, in fact, when an extraordinary number of survivals as well as illusions were finally laid to rest. It was hard to see some of them go. With others the parting was less difficult and even highly opportune.

Not only admirals lamented the passing of the battleship. Amateurs with an eye for history and good ship lines regretted it too. As its form finally became perfected over the years, the old battle wagon was a thing of stalwart handsomeness and even grace—a remarkable balancing of immense weight and thrust upon a shapely and meaningful hull. The aircraft carrier that replaces it as the ruling instrument of sea power remains an ungainly cigar box on the water, and nobody has done anything to make the monstrosity look more sea-minded and more plausible. At any rate, there are many who say it may not be with us long.

A generation ago, when I was a boy living in an old-fashioned apartment above Manhattan's Riverside Drive that boasted a huge bay window, we used to gather behind the glass with a telescope and Mother's mother-of-pearl opera glasses to watch the United States Battle Fleet come steaming up North River on its recurrent visits. There were sometimes ten, even fifteen dreadnoughts and what we called "superdreadnoughts" in line on those occasions, the ships all dressed with flags from stem to stern, crews manning the rails, bands playing, and then, upon a signal hoist from the flagship, the whole line dropping anchor simultaneously and coming to rest in midstream in a swath of white backwater as all engines went astern.

Those were great days for a boy in a bay window. The danger of Japan hadn't yet arisen, so we could keep the fleet at home and look proudly at it. Dad, who was inclined to be a pacifist and grumbled at the cost and size of the Navy, couldn't help joining us and looking too—though he remarked how much handsomer the white ships of the Spanish-American War had appeared when *he* was young. Farewell, last battleship; good-by to all that. An aircraft carrier is so clumsy that it can be handled in the North River only with the help of humiliating tugs.

The Army, for its part, also announced in 1957 the retirement of its last burden-bearing mule and its last carrier pigeon. Years ago, just when we were getting into the last world war, modern-minded congressmen of the House Military Affairs Committee snorted when they learned that the Army was still harboring mules and pigeons. It turned out that the mules became of inestimable value in the mountain fighting in Italy, where no trucks could bring up ammunition, and that the pigeons also helped when our finest electronics systems failed or had to be silenced. Good-by, mules. Good-by, pigeons.

Permit me Latin—a subject we still learned in my day:

Sic rerum summa novatur
Semper, et inter se mortales mutua
vivunt.
Augescunt aliae gentes, aliae
minuuntur . . .

What Lucretius (for the benefit of those who never had to struggle with him in the original) is saying is, "Thus the sum of things is ever being renewed, and mortals live one and all by give and take; some races wax and others wane."

Railroad in Retreat

This applies even to railroads. A few weeks ago the Baltimore & Ohio, finding itself sorely beset because *rerum summa novatur semper,* appealed to state public-service commissions to let it discontinue its traditional New York-Washington passenger service. Airplanes, private cars, busses, and the rival Pennsylvania had done it in.

For generations the B&O, the oldest railroad in the land, had contended with the upstart Pennsy for the cream of the traffic to and from the nation's capital. President-elect Lincoln, on the way to his inauguration, had arrived in rebellious Baltimore and let his car be furtively shunted in the dead of night through the B&O yards to avoid trouble—perhaps the

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

most ignominious hour in the history of the Presidency. Generations later, when the rival Pennsylvania had become one of the great commercial aggregations of America through its service of Pittsburgh's steel industry, another insurgent President-elect was about to proceed from New York to his inauguration, and the Pennsy's president, General W. W. Atterbury, offered him a special train without charge for the trip. "Tell General Atterbury that I'm paying my own fare and that, besides, we'll take the B&O," was Franklin D. Roosevelt's reported reply.

For many years after that, it became the habit of many disciples of F.D.R., as if emulating their chief's disdain for bigness, to ride the old B&O between New York and Washington. Besides, the cars were usually half empty and there was always a leisurely ferry ride at the New York end, downtown amid the piers of great ships loading, since the B&O had been edged out of coming into Manhattan itself. Good-by, B&O. Good-by, old ferry ride.

If ominous messages from several railroads are to be believed, 1957 has also seen the beginning of the end of the Pullman sleeping car. What a chapter in our history thereby draws to a close! From the astounding Palace cars of the 1870's, creaking across the Western plains with their gas lights, wainscoting, brass, and plush, to the full-dress Limiteds of father's or great-uncle's day, with stewards serving eight-course meals including oysters and terrapin at a dollar and a half per passenger, a rich and heady invitation was offered the American to brave the transit of his continent and loaf and invite his soul while doing so. Farewell, old cars, with your evocative, unpredictable names, from Susan B. Anthony to Jedidiah Morse and Raton Pass. Progress now decrees that we ride huddled four and five abreast in midair, whirling westward with trays in our laps—plus a card from the airline saying in effect that we never had it so good.

The Passing of Giants

The year 1957 also saw the passing of the Barnum & Bailey traveling circus, leaving a jaded younger generation henceforth deprived of the earthy pleasures of sawdust, steam calliopes, animal acts, and side shows of freaks, while TV producers tried to whip up pale and colorless imitations of the same by remote control. It saw the Giants leave their ancient Manhattan habitat for parts unknown to many Manhattanites. It saw Arturo Toscanini die and Carnegie Hall be signed over to the wreckers. It saw the old, familiar *Collier's* disappear and *Time* become so preoccupied with missiles as to fail to deliver its annual tribute to Professor Arnold Toynbee. In the Soviet Union, it saw Zhukov and Molotov and Shepilov go, while in America Under Secretary Herbert Hoover, Jr., and Defense Secretary "Engine Charlie" Wilson finally folded their tents and departed without popular demonstration.

Stricken Hungarians found refuge in the western world, and jam-packed New York city dwellers escaped in

astonishing numbers into innermost Westchester and Fairfield Counties, thereby creating a new jam.

The year saw the virtual passing of the one-car garage as mighty native swarms descended upon suburbia and forthwith demanded the two-car garage, ranch-style, as an embodiment of the Good Life. It also saw even the abandonment of many existing two-car garages, as the new automobiles reached hitherto undreamed-of lengths of almost twenty feet and required bigger and better housing. In fact, the new car, advertised by its makers practically in terms of a space ship, although earth-bound by its dead weight of chrome, power steering, power windows, Power Glide, and retractable hardtop, *was* the great American guided missile of 1957. Some critics called it just another elephantine dreadnought—a comment that old naval salts looked upon as showing scant respect to the virtues of the *Wisconsin*.

Some sides of our life did go on with little or no change. William Saroyan wrote another play in which starry-eyed, gossamer ne'er-do-wells were carried away by the sheer wonder of existence. The Carnegie Corporation granted more money to a foundation whose sole purpose is to provide information about foundations. The Reverend Dr. Norman Vincent Peale, answering in his column in *Look* the question of a wife who wanted to know "how I can overcome the feeling that my husband is ugly?," pronounced this bland advice: "Always look for the best in people, even in your own husband or wife." The State Department ground out almost interchangeable communiqués after in-

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conclusive meetings with leading visiting statesmen, and the United States Information Agency, headed by three successive directors in the space of a year, was in its familiar state of upheaval.

Canicular Curricula

Yet there were serious casualties in 1957—most notably in the area of our stock assumptions. Take those that had dominated our schools. When the year began, "life adjustment" was still in flower, and the latest-model schoolhouses from Maine to California rang with sounds of relaxed youngsters being trained in subjects ranging from "How to carry on a telephone conversation" to "How can my home be made more democratic?" Educationists who called themselves "child-centered" ("We teach boys and girls, not subjects") still felt they enjoyed popular support against crabbed critics who were rising to say it was high time they taught actual subjects—even mathematics. Now all that is changing in the twinkling of a Sputnik. The youthful intellect, handled gingerly up until yesterday as if too much learning might crush it, is now to be honed and sharpened to a fine, cutting, strategic edge. The lilt of rock-'n'-roll is dying in the schoolyards, as virtually every authority from the President down has come out to declare that we must take up serious teaching, if only in self-defense. Even a TV network responded to the challenge in November by starting a weekly early-evening program for juveniles on computation and the theory of numbers—complete, to be sure, with comic marionettes.

In early 1957, the American teacher was still an object of slightly disdainful commiseration. Before year's end he had become a priority in American weaponry second only to the ICBM, and, in his potentiality, almost an object of veneration. In the spring, reformers spoke hopefully of raising teachers' salaries by fifteen, twenty, maybe even twenty-five per cent if budgets could be enlarged. By November President Grayson Kirk of Columbia University called for raising full professors' salaries "dramatically" by a full hundred per cent forthwith, and no one stood up to denounce the proposal as fantastic. Even higher goals were bruited about, as President Nathan Pusey of Harvard pointed out that the Soviets' top mentors were being paid as high as the equivalent of $50,000 a year—a figure that dazzled the lunchers in many a Faculty Club. No professor over here was going to be paid anything like that just yet. But no question about it, his status was booming, somewhat like that of a wizened Nevada miner who had just struck the Mother Lode, and near the year's close the American teaching profession—or at least the scientific sector of it—seemed firmly started on its Soviet-kindled march into the executive class.

Orbitchuary for a Mortal Sin

That was, in fact, about our only boom remaining when winter set in. This was the year that opened with Elvis Presley and the stock market still at their height and that threatened to end with the whole nation feeling that it had been hit on the head. It began in an atmosphere more and more reminiscent of the wide-open days of Coolidge and the earlier Hoover as credit, securities, prices, wages, and profits all spiraled merrily upward, until by early summer exuberant voices became practically indistinguishable from their predecessors in 1929, who had predicted "a permanent plateau of prosperity." Doubters did sell out quietly, but all lived together for a few months more in an expansive glow, feeling nationally secure behind our soldier-President and our pickets of Nike and DEW Line defense. It was still safe to look down upon eastern breeds without the law as inferior in everything because they were inferior to us in riches and enterprise as well as in morality. Dr. Peale, in reassuring *Look's* millions about their daily failings, did not dwell upon the mortal sin of pride. Then, hit from above, below, and inside, we had a great fall.

It remained for another soldier, the retired, battle-worn Omar Bradley, to summon us before Thanksgiving to the exercise of broad reason and to flay an "anti-intellectual prejudice" which, he implied, had been stultifying us. This time no H. L. Mencken was on hand to gloat sardonically over the spectacle of brass hats asking that we cultivate ourselves. Many of our present intellectuals—particularly those who tried to speak in the name of ill-spoken and uncouth young men under the label of the "beat generation"—were themselves as anti-intellectual as the hucksters and back slappers they despised. No Savonarola—for Billy Graham was not that—and certainly no humorist aroused America from its self-satisfied cheer and lethargy. History may record that it took a female dog orbiting ominously above us in a cylinder finally to do that. The New York *Times* contributed one of the few notes of space humor to the hour when it brightly christened the dog in question "The Orbitch." Nineteen fifty-seven produced many surprises, but few so startling as that the *Times* should print the word "bitch." Things *were* changing.

MEANWHILE, despite all the bad things that had been said about us and the harsh judgments we were now passing on ourselves, the harpsichords in our land were still playing Bach. More than three hundred and fifty symphony orchestras had tuned up for the new season. Our laboratories still worked to heal far more than to kill. Men still spent their last dollars to buy paint to splash upon canvases in abstract designs that many of us may regard as atrocious, although our sons may not think so. A late poet who had been a successful insurance executive was being highly honored in the schools, along with another American poet who only used lower case and played the part of an intellectual anarchist. Good books restudying American history and polity were still being published and sold even in drugstores, while good men in North and South alike had bent their efforts to resolve the human crisis of Little Rock under the sign of law warmed by grace and moderation.

Censors and limiters of freedom had again appeared among us, yet in the end we were still free. We had lost some old attachments, yet we were learning to win and uphold others. We were not at year's end what we said we were at its beginning, but perhaps we had been shocked into becoming more like our better selves.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATER:
Look Backward, Playwrights

MARYA MANNES

QUITE A LOT could be made of the fact that the best plays of this season and the outstanding one of last are set in the first two decades of the twentieth century, before Americans were saddled with world leadership, before we grew up. It was the time of youth of the playwrights themselves: O'Neill's in *Long Day's Journey*, Wolfe's in *Look Homeward, Angel*, Inge's in *The Dark at the Top of the Stairs*, and—to a lesser extent, since it is symbolical rather than autobiographical—Morton Wishengrad's in *The Rope Dancers*.

What is this obsession with immaturity, of the man and of the nation? Is it a search for roots or a search for self? Is it unwilling nostalgia, even for the conspicuous sufferings of their childhood? Is it a form of escape from the overwhelming present? Is it a kind of proof that our most talented writers—O'Neill, Wolfe, Inge—became so through early acquaintance with anguish, frustration, and difference from their fellows? And is it a companion to this that these playwrights living and dead share a profound fear of a future shorn of this diversity, bland, mechanized, and deadly?

Whatever the reason, it is surely strange that our most vital theater consists of explorations into this kind of pain, a very special American pain; that they are set in physical ugliness, either of bleak gentility or aching squalor; and that however universal their emotions, they could not easily be translated into the present.

Rage and Demons

The miracle of *Look Homeward, Angel* is that Ketti Frings has been able to translate Thomas Wolfe into theater, for no writer was ever less amenable to the disciplines of time and space. But she has brought it off with little loss of Wolfe and, on the contrary, a distinct gain in clarity through the cutting of wordy underbrush. The terrible Gants, the frowzy boarders, the white marble angel, the fearful rages, the agonized boy Eugene—all are there. And so, thanks to Jo Mielziner's superb visual accompaniment, is that monstrosity of a boardinghouse, Dixieland, and the poetic stonecutting yard of the father Gant—a graveyard, indeed, of aspirations.

The whole production is admirable, but dominating it are the performances of Jo Van Fleet as Eliza Gant, obsessed with land and money, and of Anthony Perkins as her tortured seventeen-year-old, Eugene. I remember few scenes as unbearably moving as the one in which the mother who has never been a mother tries to comfort the son who has lost his first love. As she chatters all the wrong words, the boy, doubled up, covers his ears with his hands, rocking with speechless pain. It is Wolfe's agony, all the way through. It is also Wolfe's violence, his humor, his perception, and his immense longing—for what? For meaning, for expression, for love.

There are, too, traces of Wolfe's untidiness and diffuseness, and moments of that conscious rhetoric which softened and sometimes cheapened his prose. And I wish Miss Frings had not allowed the dead Ben to speak out loud from eternity to his young brother Eugene as he sets forth into the world. The ghostly voice did not belong in the crushing realities of Dixieland.

Look Homeward, Angel has some of the qualities of a Brueghel painting: the strong pulse of life, so real yet so often on the edge of caricature, the interlocking movements, the presence of demons, the saturnalian spirit, and, composing it, the implacable pattern which is, in Wolfe's case, his tragic destiny.

Loneliness and Compassion

William Inge, on the other hand, tends more to the portraits of Thomas Eakins: a sense of serenity underlies his meticulously tender studies of character and emotion. His form is subtle, yet firm; he has become a master of his playwright's craft in the balance of light and shade, the small illuminating detail, and the binding thread of attitude. He speaks throughout of loneliness and fear, the quiet and hidden kinds that all mortals suffer in one way or another. And he speaks of that major suffering, the inability to communicate, the imprisonment in

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

self. If he is not as powerful as Wolfe—he is in no way intransigent, being moved more by compassion than by rage—he is more congenial, more adroit, and more genuinely humorous.

The Dark at the Top of the Stairs has moments of real pain, but it has many more of amusement. It is full of the small pleasures of recognition: I know just how that girl feels, you say, or that woman. The play is full of whole people: the overpro-

tective young wife and mother, anxiety-driven by the absences of her salesman-husband and the vulnerabilities of her children; her brash and breezy sister who speaks knowingly of sex but cannot enjoy it; the young daughter trapped in a terrible shyness; the little brother forced into his own world; the father who hides his gnawing fears of incompetence under a crude heartiness, his love under a boyish show of virility. Inge created all of them out of deep understanding. But he is lucky in their interpreters, for the play is flawlessly performed by Teresa Wright, Pat Hingle, Eileen Heckart, and every other single member of the cast, who, thanks to director Elia Kazan and their own perceptions, know every minute who they are and what they are doing and why they are doing it.

The play itself wavers only at two points. In the overexplicit scenes between mother and son it skirts embarrassment—little boys do not speak of love and hate to their mothers this way; and the suicide of the young daughter's first date, a Jewish cadet driven to despair by his exclusion from others, is somehow out of key, as if—to pursue the pictorial analogy—one of Eakins's sitters held a knife. But these are small flaws in a warmly rewarding evening.

The Malignancy of Shame

Aside from era and setting—a tenement flat in New York City at the turn of the century—*The Rope Dancers* has only this in common with the other two American plays: it contains an unhappy child, more tragic, indeed, than any; and its premise is, again, the lack of communication between human beings which isolates them, bitterly. But Morton Wishengrad has written here a sort of tone poem of passion and misery; dark and demonic as if it issued from a netherworld. In the locked triangle of a little girl born with a six-fingered hand, a proud, enclosed mother who sees in this the punishment for the sin of lust, and the feckless father who adores his child but cannot save it, Siobhan McKenna, Beverly Lunsford, and Art Carney have given intensity and illumination to a play which is consistently absorbing, always painful, and not always credible.

The symbolism is clear enough: we all have our deformities; to hide them in shame is to feed their malignancy; they must be faced, and faced down. But there are times when one wonders why Mr. Wishengrad chose this means and these people for saying it. He went out of his way, you might say, to make his point, and the strain is evident in the play's fabric. Yet Mr. Wishengrad is a most talented playwright, with a great deal of latent power. And it is significant that rights to produce *The Rope Dancers* have been concluded in France, Norway, West Germany, Austria, Switzerland, and Italy. It is not so purely American in its texture and dimensions as the other two plays. It treats less of immaturity and provincialism. And its quality of brooding tragedy and somber symbolism would, I believe, be very much to the Continental taste. They don't need comic relief as much as we do.

THERE IS, however, one very American attitude that *Rope Dancers* shares with *Look Homeward, Angel,* and that is in the attitude of wives toward their men. Perhaps I should say that it is a reflection of this popular attitude in a matriarchal society which made the drama critics describe Art Carney's Hyland in *Rope* as a no-good weakling quite worthy of his wife's contempt, and Hugh Griffith's Gant in *Angel* as an ineffectual, drunken geyser. Now for my money, Jimmy Hyland as Wishengrad writes him is a very valuable human being. He may be a poor provider and have unreliable habits, and he likes women other than his wife (which, when you know her, is hardly surprising). But he has the capacity to love, he has intelligence and learning, and he is, above all, a delightful companion—quite worthy of the desire which he inspires in a wife who cannot admit it. As for W. O. Gant, he has immense vitality, a fine bawdy sense of humor, and a good hand and eye for carving stone. He too can give love. So why is either of these men so contemptible? Because, presumably, they are not domesticated: they cannot guarantee their wives' security or their children's happiness, and because they are not like other women's husbands.

But they are men. And though it is not surprising that women columnists who give advice to feminine readers should heap scorn and contumely on their kind, it is a little sad that masculine observers cannot applaud their struggle—however doomed—to be free men.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Almost the End of the World

A Short Story

RAY BRADBURY

SIGHTING Rock Junction, Arizona, at noon on August 22, 1959, Willy Bersinger let his miner's boot rest easy on the jalopy's accelerator and talked quietly to his partner, Samuel Fitts.

"Yes, sir, Samuel, it's great hitting town. After a couple of months out at the Penny Dreadful Mine, a juke box looks like a stained-glass window to me. We need the town; without it, we might wake some morning and find ourselves all jerked beef and petrified rock. And then, of course, the town needs us, too."

"How's that?" asked Samuel Fitts.

"Well, we bring things into town that it hasn't got—mountains, creeks, desert night, stars, things like that . . ."

And it was true, thought Willy, driving along. Set a man way out in the strange lands and he fills with wellsprings of silence. Silence of sagebrush, or a mountain lion purring like a warm beehive at noon. Silence of the river shallows deep in the canyons. All this a man takes in. Opening his mouth, in town, he breathes it out.

"Oh, how I love to climb in that old barbershop chair," Willy admitted. "And see all those city men lined up under the naked-lady calendars staring back at me, waiting while I chew over my philosophy of rocks and mirages and the kind of Time that just sits out there in the hills waiting for Man to go away. I exhale—and that wilderness settles in a fine dust on the customers. Oh, it's nice, me talking, soft and easy, up and down, on and on . . ."

In his mind he saw the customers' eyes strike fire. Some day they would yell and rabbit for the hills, leaving families and time-clock civilization behind.

"It's good to feel wanted," said Willy. "You and me, Samuel, are basic necessities for those city-dwelling folks. Gangway, Rock Junction!"

And with a tremulous tin whistling they steamed across city limits into awe and wonder.

THEY HAD DRIVEN perhaps a hundred feet through town when Willy kicked the brakes. A great shower of rust flakes sifted from the jalopy fenders. The car stood cowering in the road.

"Something's wrong," said Willy. He squinted his lynx eyes this way and that. He snuffed his huge nose. "You feel it? You smell it?"

"Sure," said Samuel, uneasily, "but, what . . . ?"

Willy scowled. "You ever see a sky-blue cigar-store Indian?"

"Never did."

"There's one over there. Ever see a pink dog kennel, an orange outhouse, a lilac-colored birdbath? There, there, and over there!"

Both men had risen slowly now to stand on the creaking floor boards.

"Samuel," whispered Willy. "The whole damn shooting match, every kindling pile, porch rail, gewgaw gingerbread, fence, fireplug, garbage truck, the *whole blasted town*, look at it! It was painted just an hour ago!"

"No!" said Samuel Fitts.

But there stood the band pavilion, the Baptist church, the firehouse, the Odd Fellows' orphanage, the railroad depot, the county jail, the cat hospital, and all the bungalows, cottages, greenhouses, gazebos, shop signs, mailboxes, telephone poles, and trash bins around and in between, and they all blazed with corn yellows, crab-apple greens, circus reds. From water tank to tabernacle, each building looked as if God had jigsawed it, colored it, and set it out to dry a moment ago.

Not only that, but where weeds had always been, now cabbages, green onions, and lettuce crammed every yard, crowds of curious sunflowers clocked the noon sky, and pansies lay under unnumbered trees cool as summer puppies, their great damp eyes peering over rolled lawns mint-green as Irish travel posters. To top it all, ten boys, faces scrubbed, hair brilliantined, shirts, pants, and tennis shoes clean as chunks of snow, raced by.

"The town," said Willy, watching them run, "has gone mad. Mystery. Mystery everywhere. Samuel, what kind of tyrant's come to power? What law was passed that keeps boys clean, drives people to paint every toothpick, every geranium pot? Smell that smell? There's fresh wallpaper in all those houses! Doom in some horrible shape has tried and tested these people. Human nature doesn't just get this picky-perfect overnight. I'll bet all the gold I panned last month that those attics and those cellars are cleaned out, all ship-shape. I'll bet you a real Thing fell on this town."

"Why, I can almost hear the cherubim singing in the Garden," Samuel protested. "How you figure Doom? Shake my hand, put 'er there. I'll bet and take your money!"

The jalopy swerved around a corner through a wind that smelled of turpentine and whitewash. Samuel threw out a gum wrapper, snorting. He was somewhat surprised at what happened next. An old man in new overalls, with mirror-bright shoes, ran out in the street, grabbed the crumpled gum wrapper, and shook his fist after the departing jalopy.

"Doom . . ." Samuel Fitts looked back, his voice fading. "Well . . . the bet *still* stands."

THEY OPENED the door upon a barbershop teeming with customers whose hair had already been cut and oiled, whose faces were shaved close and pink, yet who sat waiting to

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vault back into the chairs where three barbers flourished their shears and combs. A stock-market uproar filled the room as customers and barbers all talked at once.

When Willy and Samuel entered, the uproar ceased instantly. It was as if they had fired a shotgun blast through the door.

In the silence some of the sitting men stood up and some of the standing men sat down, slowly, staring.

"Samuel," said Willy out of the corner of his mouth, "I feel like the Red Death standing here." Aloud he said, "Howdy! Here I am to finish my lecture on the 'Interesting Flora and Fauna of the Great American Desert,' and—"

"No!"

Antonelli, the head barber, rushed frantically at Willy, seized his arm, clapped his hand over Willy's mouth like a snuffer on a candle. "Willy," he whispered, looking apprehensively over his shoulder at his customers, "Promise me one thing: buy a needle and thread, sew up your lips. Silence, man, if you value your life!"

Willy and Samuel felt themselves hurried forward. Two already neat customers leapt out of the barber chairs without being asked. As they stepped into the chairs, the two miners glimpsed their own images in the mirror.

"Samuel, there we are! Look! Compare!"

"Why," said Samuel, blinking, "we're the only men in all Rock Junction who really *need* a shave and a haircut."

"Strangers!" Antonelli laid them out in the chairs as if to anesthetize them quickly. "You don't know what strangers you are!"

"Why, we've only been gone a couple of months . . ." A steaming towel inundated Willy's face; he subsided with muffled cries. In steaming darkness he heard Antonelli's low and urgent voice.

"We'll fix you to look like everyone else. Not that the way you look is dangerous, no, but the kind of talk you miners talk might upset folks at a time like this . . ."

"Time like this, hell!" Willy lifted the seething towel. One bleary eye fixed Antonelli. "What's wrong with Rock Junction?"

"Not just Rock Junction." Antonelli gazed off at some incredible mirage beyond the horizon. "Phoenix, Tucson, Denver. All the cities in America! My wife and I are going as tourists to Chicago next week. Imagine Chicago all painted and clean and new. The Pearl of the Orient, they call it! Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, Buffalo, the same! All because . . . well . . . get up now, walk over, and switch on that television set against the wall."

Willy handed Antonelli the steaming towel, walked over, switched on the television set, listened to it hum, fiddled with the dials, and waited. White snow drifted down the screen.

"Try the radio now," said Antonelli.

Willy felt everyone watch as he twisted the radio dial from station to station.

"Hell," he said at last, "both your television and radio are broken."

"No," said Antonelli, simply.

Willy lay back down in the chair and closed his eyes.

Antonelli leaned forward, breathing hard.

"Listen," he said.

IMAGINE seven weeks ago, a late Saturday morning, women and children staring at clowns and magicians on TV. In beauty shops, women staring at TV fashions. In the barbershop and hardware stores, men staring at baseball or trout fishing. Everybody everywhere in the civilized world staring. No sound, no motion, except on the little black-and-white screens.

And then, in the middle of all that staring . . .

Antonelli paused to lift up one corner of the broiling cloth.

"Sunspots on the sun," he said.

Willy stiffened.

"Biggest damn sunspots in the history of mortal man," said Antonelli. "Whole damn world flooded with electricity. Wiped every TV screen clean as a whistle, leaving nothing, and, after that, more nothing."

His voice was remote as the voice of a man describing an arctic landscape. He lathered Willy's face not looking at what he was doing. Willy peered across the barbershop at the soft snow falling down and down that humming screen in an eternal winter. He could almost hear the rabbit thumping of all the hearts in the shop.

Antonelli continued his funeral oration.

"It took us all that first day to realize what had happened. Two hours after that first sunspot storm hit, every TV repairman in the United States was on the road. Everyone figured it was just their own set. With the radios conked out, too, it was only that night when newsboys, like in the old days, ran headlines through the streets that we got the shock about the sunspots maybe going on for—the rest of our lives!"

The customers murmured.

Antonelli's hand, holding the razor, shook. He had to wait.

"All that blankness, that empty stuff falling down, falling down inside our television sets, oh, I tell you, it gave everyone the willies. It was like a good friend who talks to you in your front room and suddenly shuts up and lies there, pale, and you know he's dead and you begin to turn cold yourself.

"That first night, there was a run on the town's movie houses. Films weren't much but it was like the Odd Fellows' ball downtown till midnight. Drugstore fizzed up two hundred vanilla, three hundred chocolate sodas that first night of the Calamity. But you can't buy movies and sodas every night. What then? Phone your in-laws for canasta or parcheesi?"

"Might as well," observed Willy, "blow your brains out."

"Sure, but people had to get out of their haunted houses. Walking through their parlors was like whistling past a graveyard. All that silence—"

Willy sat up a little. "Speaking of silences—"

"On the third night," said Antonelli, quickly, "we were all still in shock. We were saved from outright lunacy by one woman. Somewhere in this town this woman strolled out of the house and came back a minute later. In one hand she held a paintbrush. And in the other . . ."

"A bucket of paint," said Willy.

Everyone smiled, seeing how well he understood.

"If those psychologists ever strike off gold medals, they should pin one on that woman and every woman like her in every little town who saved our world from coming to an end. Those women who instinctively

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

wandered in at twilight, and brought us the miracle cure . . ."

Willy imagined it. There were the glaring fathers and the scowling sons slumped by their dead TV sets waiting for the damn things to shout Ball One! or Strike Two! And then they looked up from their wake and there in the twilight saw the fair women of great purpose and dignity standing and waiting with brushes and paint. And a glorious light kindled their cheeks and eyes . . .

"Lord, it spread like wildfire!" said Antonelli. "House to house, city to city. Jigsaw-puzzle craze, 1932; Yo-yo craze, 1928, were nothing compared with the Everybody Do Everything Craze that blew this town to smithereens and glued it back again. Men everywhere slapped paint on anything that stood still ten seconds; men everywhere climbed steeples, straddled fences, fell off roofs and ladders by the hundreds. Women painted cupboards, closets; kids painted Tinker Toys, wagons, kites. If they hadn't kept busy, you could have built a wall around this town and renamed it Babbling Brook. All towns, everywhere, the same, where people had forgotten how to waggle their jaws, make their own talk. I tell you, men were moving in mindless circles, dazed, until their wives shoved a brush in their hand and pointed them toward the nearest unpainted wall!"

"Looks like you finished the job," said Willy.

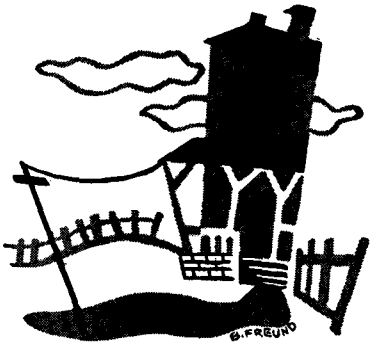
"Paint stores ran out of paint three times the first week." Antonelli surveyed the town with pride. "The painting could only last so long, of course, unless you start painting hedges and spraying grass blades one by one. Now that the attics and cellars are cleaned out, too, our fire is seeping off into, well—women canning fruit again, making tomato pickles, raspberry, strawberry preserves. Basement shelves are loaded. Big church doings, too. Organized bowling, night donkey baseball, box socials, beer busts. Music shop's sold 500 ukeleles, 212 steel guitars, 460 ocarinas and kazoos in seven weeks. I'm studying trombone. Mac, there, the flute. Band concerts Thursday and Sunday nights. Hand-crank ice-cream machines? Tyson's sold 200. Forty-nine days, Willie, Forty-nine Days That Shook the World!"

Willy Bersinger and Samuel Fitts sat there, trying to imagine and feel the shock, the crushing blow.

"Forty-nine days, the barbershop jammed with men getting shaved twice a day so they can sit and stare at customers like they might *say* something," said Antonelli, shaving Willy now. "Once, remember, before TV, barbers were supposed to be great talkers. Well, it took us one whole week to warm up, get the rust out. Now we're spouting fourteen to the dozen. No quality, but our quantity is ferocious. When you came in you heard the commotion. Oh, it'll simmer down when we get used to the great Oblivion . . ."

"Is *that* what everyone calls it?"

"It sure looked that way to most of us, there for a while."



Willy Bersinger laughed quietly and shook his head.

"Now I know why you didn't want me to start lecturing when I walked in that door."

Of course, thought Willy, why didn't I see it right off? Seven short weeks ago, the wilderness fell on this town and shook it good and scared it plenty. Because of the sunspots, all the towns in all the western world have had enough silence to last them ten years. And here I come by with another dose of silence, my easy talk about deserts and nights with no moon and only stars and just the little sound of the sand blowing along the empty river bottoms. No telling what might have happened if Antonelli hadn't shut me up. I see me, tarred and feathered, leaving town.

"Antonelli," he said aloud. "Thanks."

"For nothing," said Antonelli. He picked up his comb and shears. "Now, short on the sides, long in back?"

"Long on the sides," said Willy Bersinger, closing his eyes again, "short in back."

AN HOUR LATER Willy and Samuel climbed back into their jalopy, which someone, they never knew who, had washed and polished while they were in the barbershop.

"Doom." Samuel handed over a small sack of gold dust. "With a capital D."

"Keep it." Willy sat, thoughtful, behind the wheel. "Let's take this money and hit out for Phoenix, Tucson, Kansas City, why not? Right now, we're a surplus commodity around here. We won't be welcome again until those little sets begin to herringbone and dance and sing. Sure as hell, if we stay, we'll open our traps and the Gila monsters and chicken hawks and the wilderness will slip out and make us trouble."

Willy squinted at the highway straight ahead.

"Pearl of the Orient, that's what he said. Can you imagine that dirty old town, Chicago, all painted up, fresh and new as a babe in the morning light? We just *got* to go see Chicago, by God!"

He started the car, let it idle, and looked at the town.

"Man survives," he murmured. "Man endures. Too bad we missed the big change. It must have been a fierce thing, a time of trials and testings. Samuel, I don't recall, do you? What have *we* ever seen on TV?"

"Saw a woman wrestle a bear two falls out of three, one night."

"Who won?"

"Damned if I know. She—"

But then the jalopy moved and took Willy Bersinger and Samuel Fitts with it, their hair cut, oiled, and neat on their sweet-smelling skulls, their cheeks pink-shaven, their fingernails flashing the sun. They sailed under clipped green, fresh-watered trees, through flowered lanes, past daffodil-, lilac-, violet-, rose-, and peppermint-colored houses on the dustless road.

"Pearl of the Orient, here we come!"

A perfumed dog, with permanented hair, ran out, nipped their tires, and barked until they were completely out of sight.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The Case Against Boredom

GEORGE R. CLAY

ROMAN TALES, by Alberto Moravia. *Farrar, Straus & Cudahy. $3.75.*

DOMESTIC RELATIONS, by Frank O'Connor. *Knopf. $3.50.*

ON THE LINE, by Harvey Swados. *Atlantic-Little, Brown. $3.75.*

A BIT OFF THE MAP, by Angus Wilson. *Viking. $3.50.*

THE PASSIONATE SHEPHERD, by Samuel Yellen. *Knopf. $3.50.*

If it is true that writers reflect the prevailing mood of their countrymen, the big news from four out of five of this season's short-story collections is that a good many people in the West—Americans, Englishmen, Italians, indeed all but the Irish—are bored stiff.

There are a couple of eager beavers in *On the Line,* Harvey Swados's series of "episodes" about an automobile assembly line, but most of the workers feel like prisoners doing time. At the opposite end of the cultural hierarchy, in the title story of Samuel Yellen's *The Passionate Shepherd,* a Midwestern university professor gets so fed up with lectures, seminars, and fatuous faculty cocktail parties that he works out an elaborately simple vanishing act, executes it deftly, and starts all over again in a livelier part of town. It's not that he has gotten a raw deal from the university, or that he hates his wife—he is a full professor, the middle-aged father of grown children, and he's rather fond of his wife—he just can't stand the nagging sensation that he doesn't really exist.

June Raven, the adulterous wife in one of Angus Wilson's best stories and certainly the most amusing in *A Bit off the Map,* doesn't hate her husband either. As she explains, describing her attitude toward their marriage: "I can only sum it up by saying that it's like the attitude of almost everyone in England today to almost everything. I worked desperately hard to get out of the insecurity of my family—which in this case was not economic because they're fairly rich and left me quite a little money of my own, but social—and when I married Henry I loved every minute of it because the Ravens are quite secure in their own way—which Henry's mother calls 'good country middle class, June dear, and no more.' And if that security is threatened for a moment I rush back to it for safety. But most of the time when it's not in danger, I keep longing for more adventure in life and a wider scope and more variety and even greater risks and perils." The characters in seven out of Wilson's eight stories long for scope, variety, risks, and perils. For them (and they represent just about every class subdivision bounded by slums and castles), life under the welfare state is pure Novocain to the soul.

THE WAITERS, barbers, truck drivers, cashiers, plumbers, chauffeurs, and one lone princess who scheme and scream through Alberto Moravia's *Roman Tales* are boxed in too, though not in the American way (which usually involves either Freud or advertising) and certainly not in the peculiarly sophisticated English way. They are crippled by a loss of illusions so complete that even silent protest seems naïve; by nihilism so suffocating that the only way individuality can be expressed at all is in an endless monotony of bizarre obsessions. During the Fascist period, these twenty-seven brief, often strident and oddly disturbing sketches—about a compulsive pimp, a compulsive gambler, a compulsive glutton, and so forth—might have had collective significance as a camouflaged denunciation of the régime. But Moravia has either been unable to break himself of underground writing techniques, where to be nihilistic was itself an act of defiance, or else he now genuinely believes that it is pointless for stories to have a point.

Some half dozen of his tales could stand the test of separate publication, and two or three are truly fine. The man is, after all, a professional. But for the most part grotesqueries are simply presented, like exhibits in a side show spieled by a barker. Why bother to do more?, Moravia seems to say. Why go into causes when there are no solutions—political or any other kind? With illusions (particularly the illusion that we learn by experience) ruled out, the one thing that makes people recognizable, the only subject left worth writing about, is their obsessions. Here is a batch of examples—take them or leave them, it's all the same to me.

The sense of boredom that arises from the pages of *Roman Tales* like a miasma is due, then, less to the way the characters themselves feel than to the way Moravia seems to feel about them. They have been

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cheated by life, certainly; but he has been cheated out of more. He has been deprived of his incentive to look for meanings, to bother about insights, to take a stand for or against anything. Bitterly, one feels, he has limited himself to thumbnail sketches of fanatics—people who, because they are incapable of making real contact with anyone, generate so little conflict that to be made interesting at all they have to be drenched in melodrama.

What Keeps You Punching . . .

That is Moravia's way of protesting, and for all I know it may be a typically Italian way; but what, by implication, he is protesting against—the loss of personal conviction—is dealt with explicitly again and again by Wilson in England and Swados in America.

Swados's entire collection is a dirge to that loss, and to the paralysis of will that is apt to follow. Much as he deplores what the assembly line does to the human spirit, he can't become impassioned because he can't ignore the fact that the men are there of their own choice for the high pay, and that they are free to leave any time without fear of unemployment. One by one his characters are forced, through a combination of circumstances that are really nobody's fault, to give up the private goals without which their labor becomes mere meaningless drudgery.

Yet they refuse to quit, won't leave the place where "a man's life goes down the drain like scummy water." Unlike earlier writers on the plight of the workingman, Swados finds it almost impossible to decide who or what is to blame. Humorless, scrupulously fair, he covers the same ground over and over again, boring around after the root of all this killing monotony, enervated by the muddle of conflicting clues, stumbling finally on the somewhat limp revelation that what keeps you punching the time clock is "paying off forever on all the things you've been pressured into buying."

Conceivably this dilemma of feeling terribly cheated but having no one to blame, if confined to the characters and presented in terms of action rather than inaction, could be made poignant, ironic—anything but dull. In the only story that can stand on its own—about a foreman trying to remain "one of the boys" while carrying out an unreasonable order from above—Swados, in full control of a three-way conflict, approximates the kind of incisive portraiture he performed on Herman Felton in his novel, *Out Went the Candle.* But the rest of the time he seems as much

at a loss, as fatigued, as downright stymied by the rights and wrongs of the case as any of the men on his line.

Most of Wilson's characters are stymied, too, but instead of throwing up his hands in despair, as Swados does, Wilson rubs them together in writerly, sometimes malicious glee. Dullness is his target—the unrelieved mediocrity of the social assembly line, where everyone is cautious, conscientious, devoid of all "passion and elegance," monotonously "tolerant, forward-looking," and "never anti-social." His characters, like Swados's, return to toe the line, and for the similar reason that they incorporate the very values which they resent—they haven't the convictions of their courage. But generally not until they've had their brief fling: June Raven by running off with a bogus aristocrat and con man whom she leaves only when she discovers that he is just as craven about achieving security as everyone else is; the mistress of an artist by feigning attempted suicide to relieve, for an evening, the squalid boredom of her life; a young spinster schoolteacher by flirting momentarily with the townies she is supposed to (and does) consider vulgar.

Wilson and Swados are writing about a comparable, if far from identical, phenomenon in England and America—the spread of spiritual ennui throughout the land. In each case the question of blame is hopelessly confused because the real adversary is intangible and ubiquitous. The crucial difference between them is that Wilson has managed, in every story, to personify the adversary and arrange a brisk if losing match for his rebellious characters, whereas Swados has left his to shadowbox pointlessly with that monstrous, impersonal symbol of their own frustrations—the assembly line itself.

Gossip on the Highest Level

As for Frank O'Connor, he couldn't care less about all this preoccupation with what one of his younger characters might call "the broader national issues." His sole concern is indicated by the title of his fifteen-story volume, *Domestic Relations:* everything close to home—gossip on the highest level imaginable. And, unlike Moravia, he clings effortlessly to the illusion that people can and do learn from experience; if not his characters, then the reader. Gently, but at once, he takes you by the hand and leads you to a definite time and place, a precise moment in the endless process of growing up, and at that place in time you can be sure that you will find what he hinted would be there. It will not only be there, it will be a treasure. For to O'Connor, compromise of the sort involved in growing up can be enriching rather than debasing, and disillusionment, as he shows, can be pure magic.

There is no question of invisible adversaries or of values that cancel one another out, leaving the author without a charge to convict on. O'Connor hasn't the remotest intention of putting society on trial, he doesn't believe in fanatics, and boredom is a state he probably wouldn't even pretend to understand. Should you try to explain the situation, he would wait patiently for you to finish, then tell you about the time a young boy, spying one night on the newly married couple next door as they undressed, saw the two kneel down to say their prayers before getting into bed, and how at that moment the boy felt that he had "ceased to be the observer and became the observed." Or he might instead describe a girl he knew once, an ugly little thing who grew up to be a startling beauty, but though she was courted vigorously could not

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bring herself to marry any of her suitors and ended up, quite happily, a nun—and he would tell you why he thought that happened. He could go on in this way for as long as you were willing to listen, and you would probably be willing to listen for a long time.

Sometimes you wish he would involve you a little more completely in the goings-on, and that the goings-on themselves were less gossipy and more grueling. But his way is a good one.

Samuel Yellen, whether or not he is writing about fed-up professors, goes the same way and for basically the same reason: his specialty is people qua people. He is interested in them in quite a different way from O'Connor, of course. O'Connor himself has described the difference admirably in one of his stories. The wife, an impetuous type who is always hashing over her friends' complexes, gets impatient with her husband for never listening and accuses him of preferring to know people superficially, whereupon "he lost his temper and snapped: 'Superficially is a damn good way to know people.' And this, as she realized, wasn't what he meant either. She suspected that, whereas her plumbing of the depths meant that she was continually changing planes in her relations with people, moving rapidly from aloofness to intimacy and back, enthusing and suspecting, he considered only the characteristics that could be handled consistently on one plane. And though his approach was by its nature inaccurate, she had to admit that it worked; because in the plumbing business you never really knew where you were with anyone."

YELLEN is in the plumbing business—but he can be extremely good at it. "Your Children Will Burn," about a father realizing that he is inadvertently doing to his son exactly what his own father had unknowingly done to him, is a Freudian fugue of terrifying power and insight. Together with O'Connor's "The Ugly Duckling," it is the best of the sixty-eight stories in these five volumes. A number of Yellen's others are first-rate, though a few do misfire; he is far less "superficial" than O'Connor, but not as reliable. And there's this difference too: even, or perhaps I mean especially, at his best, the nature of Yellen's material is such that he leaves you with a sense of irreparable loss, whereas with O'Connor, even at his worst, it's invariably gain.

A SENSE of loss isn't at all the same thing as a sense of boredom, but through hopelessness it is collaterally related. And the rather unsettling fact remains that a majority of these American and English and Italian stories have a common underlying theme, the same theme that has been exploited three times by Françoise Sagan. If it weren't for the Irishman, a good case could be made for the contention that daily life under democracy can be found to be every bit as dull as it is under dictatorship.

If you tried to sell that bill of goods to O'Connor, I suspect he would wince, smile to make up for the wince, then ask quietly: "Whose daily life?"

But One of Them Is a Bear

SAUL K. PADOVER

THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE SOCIAL SCIENCES, by Ralph Ross and Ernest Van Den Haag. *Harcourt, Brace. $7.50.*

This work by philosopher Ross and sociologist Van Den Haag differs from most textbooks in the so-called social sciences in at least three respects: it has style, it has a sense of history, and it concerns itself with values. Each of these qualities has been conspicuously lacking in American social science, whose products have been full of jargon, deliberately unhistorical (in many instances, anti-historical), and painfully "objective."

In their hurry to establish a new discipline, sociologists and such allied practitioners as "communications specialists" have thrown out the past, and with it most of the experience and much of the wisdom of mankind. Sliced off from the total flow of historic events and ideas in time, the work of many sociologists, despite occasional fine insights, has been curiously flat and ephemeral, a silhouette, we might say, rather than a portrait.

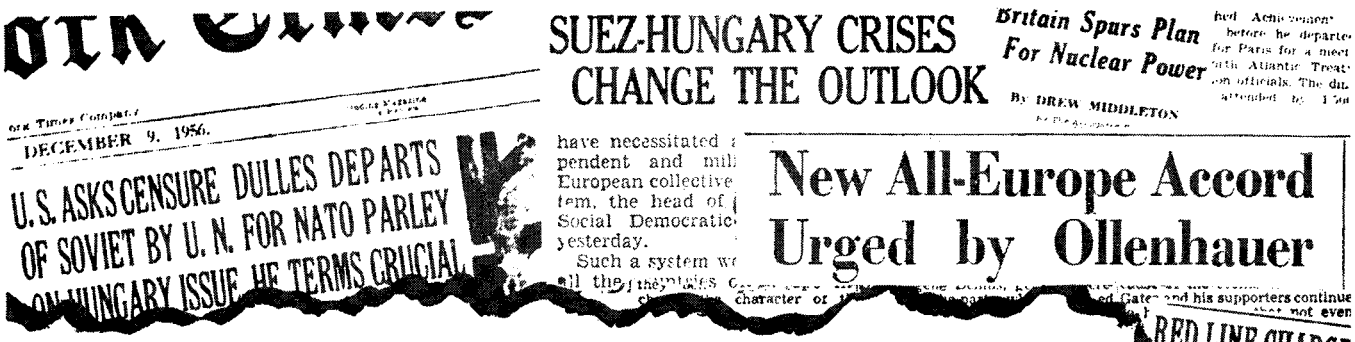
Even more harmful has been the assumption, mostly implicit, that a description or summary of collected current data about some transitory human action or reaction constitutes "science"—provided only that the findings be presented "objectively," that is to say, in words without color and without evaluative connotations. The attempt to be "scientific" has been reinforced by a formidably dreary arsenal of clichés.

The Messrs. Ross and Van Den Haag, whose erudition is impressive, have avoided both the stylistic and intellectual shortcomings of their professional colleagues. They are not afraid to write in the English language, and they show respect for its richness and rhythms. They are also aware that man, at any point anywhere, is a product of the total human experience and is therefore part of a continuing development.

AS FOR value judgments, the authors reject the notion that it is possible to be "neutral" in dealing with human institutions and situations: in order to be meaningful, facts have to be selected, organized, and interpreted. It is ignorance or hypocrisy to pretend otherwise.

To illustrate their position, they recall Abraham Lincoln's story about the wife who, seeing her husband struggling with a bear, shouted: "Go to it, husband! Go to it, bear!" To which they add: "The scholar, of course, is not wedded to either party. But does this mean that he cannot point out that one is a bear?"

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



How Much Do Headlines Mean To YOU?

WHEN you open your daily paper, don't you often feel as though you had walked into the middle of a movie or a play? As though you had missed the beginning of the action?

Headlines proclaim a diplomatic crisis in one part of the world, an uprising in another, a coup d'état in still another. You wish you knew precisely what lies behind the current action so you could better understand the current scene—perhaps anticipate the next.

If you do feel this way, if this is the kind of news coverage you want, you should be reading THE REPORTER regularly. For THE REPORTER regularly gives you the *whole* story, in detail, written so that you get all the pertinent facts clearly and concisely. It searches out so much more news, uncovers so much *original* information, that it has already won ten major awards for outstanding journalism.

To show you how this kind of reporting increases your understanding of the news, we're offering you this special "new subscriber" rate: For the next nine months, you can get THE REPORTER for less than a penny a day. You can receive

the next 18 issues for only $2.67

This is 41% less than you'd pay if you went out and bought these same 18 issues at your newsstand.

If you are already a subscriber to The Reporter, then don't you think your friends would enjoy it, too? And you have the satisfaction of giving so much—at so little cost.

You needn't send any money now—we'll be glad to bill you later, if you prefer. Your subscription—or your friends'—will begin as soon as we receive your order. So mail the reply card opposite right now!

Regular rates: 1 year $5, 2 years $8, 3 years $10
Add $1 per year for foreign postage

THE REPORTER 136 East 57th Street, New York 22, N.Y.

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There lives at this time in Judea

. . . a man of singular virtue whose name is Jesus Christ, whom the barbarians esteem as a prophet, but whose followers love and adore as the offspring of the immortal God. He calls back the dead from the grave and heals all sorts of diseases with a word or touch.

He is a tall man, well shaped, of an amiable and reverend aspect, and his hair is of a color that can hardly be matched, falling in graceful curls, waving about and very agreeably couching upon his shoulders, parted on the crown of his head, running as a stream to the front fashioned after the Nazarites.

His forehead high, large and imposing; his cheeks without spot or wrinkle, and beautiful with a lovely red; his nose and mouth formed with exquisite symmetry; his beard of a color suitable to his hair, reaching below his chin and parted in the middle like a fork.

His eyes bright blue, clear and serene, look innocent and dignified, manly and mature. In proportion of body, most perfect and captivating, his hands and arms most delectable to behold.

He rebukes with majesty, counsels with mildness, his whole address, whether in word or deed, being eloquent and grave.

No man has seen him laugh, yet his manners are exceedingly pleasant; but he has frequently wept in the presence of men.

He is temperate, modest and wise; a man for his extraordinary beauty and divine perfection surpassing the children of men in every sense.

—Apocryphal word portrait ascribed to one Publius Lentulus during the reign of Tiberius Caesar and first found in the writings of Saint Anselm, Archbishop of Canterbury during the eleventh century.

© 1956, Rye Idea Co.

WESTERN NEWSPAPER UNION

310 East 45th Street, New York 17, New York • MU 9-4700

Albert L. Ramsay, Manager

PRODUCED 2004 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED